

ESCAPED FROM THE GALLOWS.

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SOUVENIRS

OF

**A CANADIAN STATE PRISONER**

IN 1838.

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Being neither well read nor in any way familiar with writing, it is very natural that I should have hesitated before giving these memorial notes to the public. Indeed they are not very important, and I feared I would be unable, such as they were, to clothe them in an acceptable dress. Nevertheless, I was constantly being urged by my friends to have them printed, even by those whose prisoner I had been, and who were then acting under the authorities of 1838; my former jailers in fact, all seemed anxious that I



should afford the public a good laugh at the expense of the officials, so long and so thoroughly deceived and mocked by me.

Owing probably my life to the idea that made me feign insanity during so many months, a dreadful and difficult part which I rehearsed so successfully, it was the opinion of many that these peculiar adventures would not be the least curious amongst the various episodes in the history of political imprisonments of the times.

To feign to be epileptic and a madman during several months, to force the conviction that I was really mad on the medical attendants of the jail, on the magistrates who then came to interrogate the prisoners, on the jailers who were in hourly communication with me, and lastly on my fellow-prisoners themselves, and especially on a few intimate friends my fellow-prisoners, one alone of whom received my confidence after having been all along deceived like all the others, all this required more vigilance, and a stricter

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guard over all my motions and even my looks, more combination and observation, and more steadiness in following a definite purpose than a cursory perusal of the following narrative may seem to impress the mind of the careless reader. Every day I had to invent some new trick of madness; I was closely watched by the jailers (it will be seen hereafter how I got rid of the old doctor of the jail, Doctor Arnoldi); the other prisoners, although full of sympathy with me, might not all have kept my secret had they known or even merely suspected my *ruse*; therefore I was on my guard day and night, and whilst speaking sensibly now and then, it was that very moment I selected to enter into some of the wild concerts which told of my inveterate insanity to those who were beginning to be inclined to think that I was sane enough at times.

Now mild as a lamb, the next moment a roaring maniac ready to tear into pieces the man daring enough to approach me. I was

then a very powerful man. I cared not for two men; with a twist of my wrist I could make them wheel away from me; and it is this great physical strength possibly more than any other cause that forced upon my jailers and my fellow-prisoners the settled conviction that I was irremediably mad; for, when during the first days of my imprisonment, it was attempted to master me, I played such havoc among the jailers and turnkeys who tried to lay hands upon me that I sent them spinning round and round the room as if they were so many tops, and in such a rough manner that they began from that very moment to feel a kind of awe for the madman.

"A madman alone is strong enough to send us spinning in that fashion," I heard them mutter in my hearing. Therefore no one will be surprised probably when I state that the greatest effort required from me was to look in earnest when all eyes stared at me in silent and fearing wonder; but I

was never betrayed by any want of constant guard over all my acts; I was never caught napping, no not even once.

To feign madness is already no small task; but to see all those people gaping at me in fear and surprise at the sight of my herculean feats of strength; to see those whom I was bound in self-defence to deceive, the magistrates, the sheriff, admit as a necessary consequence of the loss of my wits, the unspeakable nonsense I poured in their ears, and never, for one single moment, allow the faintest smile to open my lips, (and mark, that I was an inveterate joker all my life), that was unquestionably the most difficult part of my *rôle*; aye, it was sometimes a real torture, for, in spite of all, I felt ready to choke with laughing in the midst of all my *dand drums*, but I never gave way, and hence, I say, the torture.

At the time of the *troubles* of 1838, I was twenty-one years of age. I helped my father on the family farm; I was fond of poli-

tics ; I read all the papers that came in my way ; I looked upon the self-named *constitutionals* of that time as on so many brigands, and upon my soul and conscience I believed that the patriotic majority of the House of 1836 had nobly done their duty. It is needless to add that I believe so still, and that I have not, like so many others, turn my back upon the deeds of that epoch and thrown dirt in the face of the greatest names of our history.

No one then amongst the Canadian population had the least suspicion that, in lord Gosford's government, there were scoundrels and traitors such for instance as attorney-general Ogden who, even in 1836, advised arbitrary measures with the view of forcing the people to resort to arms, the better to crush them afterwards and by those means to bring in a victorious minority to rule over the country.

All Canadian hearts had been electrified by the insurrection of 1837, when absolute

right if not political prudence was on our side ; and as there were in St. Johns where I resided, ultra loyalists who spoke of nothing short of hanging every man bearing a Canadian name, we had the greatest desire to pay a few of these gents with the same coin.

It was noticed, in St. Johns as elsewhere, that these Canadians who devoted themselves soul and body to the support of the government, were generally more bitter and rabid in their hostility against their own countrymen than the British themselves. In all countries, turncoats are invariably more desperately violent against their former friends, more cowardly submissive before their new and adopted masters than the natural adversaries of their race. This is due to the fact that the souls of those people are strangers to all that is noble, for a traitor never had a noble and generous mind ; nobleness and treachery are two antagonistic expressions. And thus it was that the Canadian turncoats of 1837 and 38 have been for

the most part all base and cowards, for what made them turncoats was their want of honor and patriotism.

The man who is so much wanting in feeling as not even to remain neuter in such a cause, but to betray his brothers and lead them to the gallows, will not stop half-way in his course of dishonor and rascality.

The useless and often brutal vexatious acts of 1837 had caused a leaven of exasperation to remain in the hearts of the population. How could we see walking on our streets one of these ill-favored men who were the voluntary slaves of the chiefs of the *Doric Club*, men so insolent with us and so base with them; who played the despots in St. Johns and the surrounding countries, and who kissed the ground before the tories of that time; how could we see these vile men walking our streets without an insurmountable shudder of hatred and anger? These men were generally devoid of all personal worth. Fear alone or the greed of money, of

rewards or the expectation of favors were the only motives of their acts against us. Not one generous idea in these men, not one noble thought, not one honorable purpose, not one useful project! They had made themselves informers, and they *never soared once above that infamous position.*

Nothing but hatred and the desire of harming us could we ever see in their countenance, nothing but their readiness to humble and tyrannize over us. It is needless to state that we were even in our hatred of them.

I have not the least doubt that all the vexations heaped upon us by our own countrymen, their efforts to please the government by using us as foot stools for their ambition, and the object and aim of their insidious accusations, have had more to do than anything else in keeping alive within the Canadian population an ever growing exasperation against the government.

We felt that the British were acting their own natural part, and their hostility did not



prevent our esteem for them ; but when we saw Canadians stepping out of their own proper sphere, which was to remain *at least neuter*, and act as despicable spies of their former friends and informers against men of their own blood, how could we help being filled with disgust, hatred, contempt for the turncoats and with a burning wish to be avenged for our wrongs ?

That is, in my opinion and that of the majority of the people, that is the main cause, very likely, of the insurrection of 1838, the only one in which I was involved.

In that year of 1838 I reached my twenty-first year. Politics were the only topic and business of the times. Constantly excited by the petty tyranny and vexations of the loyalists of the interior, exaggerated news from the United States reached us every week where, it was reported, Doctors Nelson and Côte were organizing a strong and well armed body of men to come to our help and deliverance. A single moment of sober

thought would have been enough to convince us that *deliverance* could not come from that quarter; that having missed a more favorable opportunity in 1837, it became an impossibility, in 1838, to obtain any real advantage, and that however sympathetic might be our friends on the other side of the line, they could not move in our behalf when we were so completely isolated, and so wretchedly organized to meet or oppose the strong colonial force at the bid of the government. We should also have reflected that the sympathizers being unable, however willing, to forward any considerable support in arms or money, those men who were preaching insubordination and resistance to the authorities, were sending us, as sure as faith, to an awful butchery, and so it came to pass. But in those times, we thought only of the petty vexations daily heaped upon us; we desired to humble the loyalists; we believed in the possible interference of the American government; we were told that ultimately that

government would move in our behalf, but that we must commence first, and commit ourselves somewhat before it could, with some apparent right, stretch a helping hand to us; all these thoughts seemed to us full of wisdom and sound sense, and we longed to make a show at last in this part of our country, and to retaliate forcibly against the authors of our misfortunes of 1837.

On the 3rd. September 1838, as I was along with a dozen men working on my father's farm, in the parish of St. Johns, I descried two men proceeding through the fields in my direction, one of them was Dr. Côte of Napierville. I had a slight acquaintance with him. He shook hands with me, and introduced me to his friend Dr. Robert Nelson. After exchanging a few words, I retreated gradually from the group of laborers by whom we were then surrounded, and when far enough to be out of hearing, Dr. Côte bluntly addressing me: "Poutré," says he, "we are now moving for the overthrow of the govern-

ment ; will you join us ?" I was then twenty-one years of age ; strongly imbued with anglo-phobia ; for a long time I kept myself in a feverish state of excitement (useless vexations had been committed that very year) ; but chiefly was I desirous to humble our St. Johns loyalists, to retaliate against them all their tyrannical persecutions. I could see them now humbled and forlorn pass before my eyes, and I said within myself : " Oh ! but that my turn should come once !"—Besides, to tell the truth, work on the farm seemed to be hard lines ; a small revolution was just on hand, a ready means, I believed, of bettering my situation, and giving me a chance of lifting my head proudly in the presence of our loyalists. Therefore, I replied to Côte :

—Done—The thing suits me entirely ; the heat is very intense in the fields, and I would prefer, do you see, to be the governor of the country.

—Not so fast, my friend, not so fast ; there

are a good many besides you that we have to provide for.

—Never mind, let us ahead ; and we'll see afterwards. I was only joking. I will rest satisfied with a good deal less than a governorship.

—This time, we are sure to succeed, said Côte.

—So much the better, for, do you see, the blows generally fall upon our shoulders.

—It is precisely because we failed last year, that we will be directed by experience this year. We know now, do you see, wherein we failed.

—I'll tell you at once, if you wish ; you have failed because you had nothing but worn out and disused muskets to arm the *habitants* with ; how the deuce can we shoot down a Britisher with a gun no better than a stick ? If you wish us to fight, and there are lots of men, you know, ready to fight, give us, give them guns, cannon ; give us powder to load them with and balls ; and then, do you see,

there shall be many Britishers whose days shall be no more.

—You shall have all you want, guns, cannon, powder and shot and plenty of it, too. Our plans are well matured. We cannot do all on the other side of the line. We are far from wealthy. If you are anxious to be delivered, you must send us funds that we may buy the largest quantity of arms possible. Raise money by subscribing amongst yourselves. Organize yourselves; let every village, each range have its proper organization. Appoint officers and collectors, meet frequently, keep the men stirring, and keep yourselves posted on all that is going on. At all events we'll let you know everything, and there are, I assure you, many things going on on the other side of the line of which you are not sufficiently informed.

—That's a fact; we are not sufficiently well organized. There are lots of our people with plenty of means to buy a musket; those should purchase a gun with their own

money, and by that means, there will be a larger quantity of arms to be distributed amongst those whose purse is badly filled.

Whilst we were talking thus, Dr. Côte's companion, Dr. Nelson, remained mute. He looked as sober as a canvass picture; he stared at me; never had I seen before such a glacial and forbidding physiognomy. At last, addressing me:

—Poutré, says he, you seem to be an active and intelligent fellow, a good patriot sincerely devoted to the good cause; if you wish it, your share in this business may be glorious. Are you ready for all exigencies?

—That I am.

—It is no joking matter, mind you, that we are to involve in. Once started, there is no going back. It is our heads we hazard in the venture. Ere you join the movement, think seriously about it; because, once started, you'll have to go ahead willing or not, to the bitter end.

—I am not the man to recede, doctor. I

have reflected ; I long to help in the deliverance of my country. I'll follow you.

—Not yet, says he. There is much to be done here ; and we wish to avail ourselves of the help you can afford us here. Two things are pressing before all :

1o. Organizing committees which will be converted afterwards into companies ;

2o. Collecting funds for the purchase of arms. Will you devote all your energy to both these objects ?

—That I will, I said.

—Well, then, we shall administer to you the following oath ; and immediately after, set to work.

I therefore took this oath :

“I swear to use all my energy and my courage for expelling the Britishers from Canadian soil, and to continue my efforts until not one of them be found within its limits.”

—Now, said Côte, we know, Poutré, that we may depend upon you. Provide yourself



with a New Testament, go along and across the parishes, make the Canadian patriots take this same oath to join us ; meanwhile, you shall solicit a few subscriptions the amount of which shall be used in the purchase of the arms we require for our success ; without arms, I need not tell you, we can't stir. Will you do all this with zeal and discretion ?

—On my head and upon my honor, I do promise.

—Very well, good bye ; we leave you to your work, and begin as soon as possible.

The two gentlemen went away. I felt taller by a foot. This mission of swearing my countrymen, collecting funds, organizing committees, made me feel very big in my own eyes. Things seemed to me to shape themselves in huge proportions ; I was assuming a very grave responsibility after all, and I determined to set to work without delay.

It is needless to state that I slept very little the following night.

On the morrow, I procured a New Testament, and I sallied forth to tramp the country parts, swearing my friends and collecting funds. In a short time over 3,000 people had taken the oath, and the collections, although not as plentiful as I wished them, were nevertheless large enough to be of considerable help. But I was not so successful in the organization of committees, because, almost invariably, people would talk a good deal, but not one out of thirty would move or act. Of course all proposed organization was enthusiastically received, but never carried out, and all the meetings were consumed in vain talk, words, words.

Meanwhile time wore away and the events likewise. Our informations from the United States spoke of active preparations on a large scale for coming to our help. There were, it was reported, large deposits of arms and ammunition; numbers of volunteers were

ready to cross over the line and join us. It was even hinted that the American government would interfere so soon as we had had some decided advantage over the British troops. We lulled ourselves with these chimerical ideas, and we looked upon our success as an assured fact, since, this year at least, we would be fully provided with arms, money and men. How earnestly and impatiently did we not wait for the moment when at last we should be able to handle those weapons so long expected and promised so many times !

We had been ordered to be ready to act in the beginning of November, 1838. I had been promoted to a company. I was all zeal, all fire, and yet, a certain feeling of anxiety would creep into my mind, when I reflected that we had not as yet received a single musket, a single cannon. We were told, it is true, to be of good cheer and that every thing would be all right at the proper time; but it seemed to me that the *proper*

*time ought to be before and not after the battle.*

However, on 1st. November, being ordered to march on Napierville, I proceeded thither with my company on the evening of the 2nd. We mustered at least 3,000 men in the village. The loyalist volunteers were entrenched at Odeltown. We were informed that they had fortified the church, and that they were waiting for us there to attack them. As customary in our country villages, the cemetery extended all around the church, enclosed within a stonewall which they had had no time or neglected to embattle.

The attack on Odeltown having been decided upon, we reviewed our forces and the number and state of our arms. We were as I said before, over 3,000 men, and we had about 400 muskets in all, mostly sporting fowling pieces, one hundred of which perhaps went off at pleasure. And those arms from the United States were always coming, but never arriving.

On the 6th. November, in the evening, we were ordered to stand ready to proceed to the attack of Odeltown early the following morning. At last, there was to be a battle, and we were going to meet those volunteers who were such bravadoes when they had to deal with women and children.

A thousand of our men were commanded although we had but four hundred muskets; but it was agreed upon that those who had no arms would take the guns of those who fell in the attack.

In 1838, the country around Odeltown was not unwooded as we see it now. The wood stood near the cemetery. That is the spot we selected for our attack. In a few minutes we had run over the distance between the wood and the enclosing wall of the cemetery; under the shelter of this wall we began to fire away in a spirited manner at the church wherein the volunteers were concentrated. The latter had placed a gun near the church and pointing in our direction, but it was of

very little use to them, for we selected, amongst our own men, a first rate sharpshooter whom we supplied with a number of ready loaded muskets, and every gunner attempting to fire the gun was at once shot fatally by him. After an hour or two of such firing without much benefit or disaster on either side, retreat was sounded and our band proceeded to return to Napierville. We resumed the attack on the following morning with a similar result. Without ordnance we were unable to storm the church and expel the volunteers. Having killed a few of their men, we abandoned the useless undertaking and went back to Napierpille to spend over the night. We had lost in the two encounters forty-three men; the volunteers on their side, so it was reported, had lost about a hundred, for we were better marksmen than they. But all this firing and loss of valuable lives had in fact led to nothing definite.

During our march back to Napierville, I

managed to get near Dr. Côte, and I enquired whether we were to receive any more muskets and especially cannon.

—What do you want us to do, says I, without some ordnance, to expel these scoundrels from the church? If we do not get arms, it is better to leave the spot at once. Where are those arms you have promised? Without them, you know that you are leading us to be slaughtered uselessly.

Although he tried to look cool, I could see in his looks, that he had nothing good to communicate. It seemed to me that he was trying to hide something from me and he looked quite different from his usual manner. He told me to call upon him at Napierville.

It was then for the first time that I began to suspect that something was going wrong. I was reminded of many circumstances which the fixed idea filling my head had prevented me from noticing before.

The more I considered all I had seen and heard and expected for the last eight days,

the more did I say to myself: "It is evident that those rascals are deceiving us and that we shall get no arms. After all, if it were true that deposits of arms existed on the other side of the line, how very simple would it have been to distribute them whilst we were at Odeltown which is situated almost on the line itself? Is there any sense in leading us twice to fight without weapons when at the same time, large deposits of arms existed in the neighborhood?"

My mind recoiled from the thought of such a cruel deceit as the assembling of some thousand men on the promise of being supplied with the necessary weapons for a fair fight, and then to mock them when they were engaged in a deadly conflict. There was something so infamous in the fact of exciting a whole population to rebellion for the purpose of betraying them afterwards and delivering them into the hands of an irritated government, that I felt the blood rushing up to my brain whenever the suspi-



cion of a probability of this horrible deceit came across my mind. I knew full well that after what I had done, after my tramping the country, my collections of money, my swearing of thousands of patriots, and my presence amongst insurgents armed against the government, I knew full well, I say, that I had no indulgence to expect; that I was doomed in fact. I could not realize the fact that I had been fighting like a foolish fellow on behalf and at the bid of people who mocked me and my countrymen. How mad I felt at the idea of having been imposed upon and betrayed in such a cruel way! I said to myself therefore: "We shall see this evening what they have got to say for themselves. There must be an end to all this mockery! Why, are we going again to pepper away at stone walls with small bullets? two months of that stupid work would see us exactly at the same point that we started from! If only we had a couple of small ordnance, how quick those rascally volunteers

would be dislodged from their fortified position. To think that for the last two months we are promised a sufficient quantity of arms, and that, when most needed, not one single musket has been provided ! And all those poor confiding men are there, all compromised by fools or traitors ! For surely, there is no middle way to get out of it ; if really they possess arms, they should have them forwarded at once, or else they are the most stupid people in the world : if, in reality, they have no arms at all, then we have been betrayed by these men since the last two months. But is it possible that, if the latter, they would dare remain with us ? For, if really they betray us they should know that neither I nor my companions are willing to let them quickly seek a shelter whilst we risk our necks on the gallows through their own fault. Had they said to us at once : " We are unable to supply you with arms, " not one amongst us would have stirred from his home !

We came into Napierville in the evening, more down-hearted than fatigued. Tormmented with fear and suspicion, I hastened to call on Côte. I failed to see him. I went back again about nine o'clock ; no better success. The thing seemed to me unaccountable. Had he not told me to call upon him ? At last, I started at eleven o'clock fully determined to pass over the bodies of ten men, if necessary, in order to reach him. To my intense surprise, I was allowed to go in without any hinderance, and I found myself in Côte's presence.

—My dear Poutré, says he, we have this very moment been informed that the troops are marching on Napierville. They are yet at a distance of twenty-four miles from there, and therefore they may be expected the day after to-morrow between ten and eleven o'clock. They are said to muster nearly 5,000 men. Start at once or at peep of day to-morrow ; go to Lacolle where the arms are now arrived for sure. There should be five

thousand muskets and lots of ammunition. Command carts or other vehicles ; you are free to spare no expense and see that the whole supply be here at noon the latest. Pick up some active and trustworthy men to help you and be smart about it. It is a proof of great trust I am now giving you. Away, quick !

If all of us, poor deluded creatures, had not been benighted and deprived of even our common sense, I should, for one, have perceived that all this was a sorry joke, a falsehood from one end to the other.

In the then state of the roads (every one knows what they are in November), one hundred and fifty carts could not have been enough to convey five thousand muskets and the accompanying ammunition. To pretend to unload a *bateau* of the muskets and ammunition, to have them transferred into carts, *which latter should be procured first*, and proceed to Napierville in order to be there at noon, all this was such a physical impos-

sibility that such an order could only issue from the disordered brain of a man intent of mocking us to the very last minute.

But the order was given with such earnestness and apparent good faith; master Côte looked so happy to be able to inform us that those arms so long desired and expected were at last on hand; we longed so much to handle real muskets instead of the poor weapons we had now, hardly fit to shoot partridges and hares and that seemed to recoil at the sight of a Britisher, that this piece of news was received with hurrahs. Oh! that we had reflected one moment, the absurdity of the whole thing would have struck us at once.

Unwilling to wait for the dawn of the morrow, I started immediately for Lacolle, with a strong desire of performing my mission with honor to myself. I knocked at every door on my way with the expectation of finding a horse or a vehicle and I commanded rather than requested people to

proceed at once to Lacolle for the purpose of conveying our arms from there to Napierville.

Some of the people made no observation, but most of them feared to go out in such horrid weather and over such bad roads. Many asked such ridiculous prices for their teams that I felt indignant at their meanness and want of patriotism. I remonstrated, I threatened, but in vain, for few of the people took the road. They seemed to guess instinctively that I was having a good joke at them, or else that I was myself the foolish victim of some designing people.

I had not been ten minutes in Lacolle before I was convinced that I had been shamefully deceived together with all my friends and countrymen of Napierville. The awful oath that I uttered when the truth in all its evident, irresistible light stared me in the face! once only does a man swear such an oath in a lifetime; my head was on fire, my blood in a terrible ferment.

The carts I had put into requisition were

beginning to arrive. I did not know where to hide myself after the peremptory orders I had given and my threats if they were not complied with at once; how ashamed I felt in presence of those poor people who were asking me in their simple way: "Where is the load we are to convey to Napierville?" I wished myself at a hundred feet under the surface of the ground I stood upon.

They became enraged not without cause when arrived at Lacolle at the very dawn of day, they found that they had been on a goose's errand. But I was yet more deceived than they were after all, for they naturally looked upon me as the real guilty party, as the man solely responsible for this extremely bad joke, for such it appeared to them. They surrounded me and the more exasperated amongst them seemed very desirous of tearing me to pieces. However, when they saw that I was as exasperated and disgusted as themselves, they understood at last that

I was also in earnest, and after my solemn affirmation that I was a victim like themselves, and the distribution of a little money to the most needy, we parted not as good friends altogether, for their nocturnal journey hanged heavy upon their minds, but at all events I saw, by their looks, that I had a chance of bringing my bones entire to Napierville.

But if I succeeded in pacifying them, I was far from being pacified myself. The trick was too infamous. True then it was that we had had to deal with two traitors, two rascals bold enough to play such a trick in cold blood, and to the very last minute, upon a whole population. That population was now compromised; exposed for the future and without any means of defence to the hatred of the tories and to the vengeance of a Colborne. I, Félix Poutré, had allowed myself to be mocked without suspecting in the least during two long months that I was the plaything and the scape-goat of two ruffians.



Like a child they had stuffed me with all kinds of tales, falsehoods, and idle stories; I had foolishly ascribed to patriotism all their schemes for our success in overthrowing the government; those two friends had availed themselves of my sincerity of purpose, of my zealous devotion to the country of my birth! I had confided in them, I had believed all they said, even those things which now seem to me so unreasonable and silly. I was awakening as from a long dream, and I asked to myself whether I was really the poor fool to whom all this had happened.

And what was to be the end of all this? what was to be done? no arms! and the troops were marching upon us! caught between two fires! the troops coming on one side, and on the other the volunteers who had evidently been ordered to concentrate on Napierville! we were caught in a trap as it were. What was to become of my poor friends and their families, and their proper-

ties? The latter were sure to become the prey of the flames kindled according to the national propensity of the British. How many of us were to be arrested, imprisoned, shot or hanged? All these thoughts crowded themselves in my mind and at last I felt that I was regaining possession of my usual good sense. Had I been the victim of hallucination? I could then see the truth in all its nakedness—and those arms so often promised? ah, fool! fool! that I was!

But, above all, one thing was in my mind.

—Why the deuce, said I to myself, why did they send me here at all, when none knew better than they that there were no arms waiting for me here? At last every thing was explained to me. I could now see clearly that the object was to have me out of the way for some time in order to allow Nelson and Côte to escape with more facility. Oh! fool, fool that I was!

I had a second sight as it were, and it seem-

ed to me that I could see them both running stealthily across the line. It will be seen presently that I was no more blind, but that I could grasp the situation in all its features. This almost certainty of their flight, the sort of vision which now made every thing plain to my mind, again make me curse the two villains. I do not mean that it is right to curse any one, but my case was a terrible one, and perhaps under the circumstances this cursing was not altogether *inexcusable*. There I stood motionless for more than one half hour, my mind tortured by all those thoughts; but the probable flight of Nelson and Côte soon aroused me and I said to myself: "Go ahead, old fellow, who knows but you may be yet in time!" And I directed my steps in a rage towards Napierville.

During the way I had plenty of leisure to think over the facts of the last two months; to weigh with my returned good sense the illusions of my mistaken and misled pa-

triotism, my own acts and those of others, to reflect on the infallible consequences of my folly. I could now see staring me in the face the awful predicament in which our stupid credulity and the dreadful treachery of two men had thrown Lower Canada. It became clear as daylight that a second insurrection would be crushed in a shorter time even than the first; I felt that we had begun this new movement and rising with chances a great deal weaker than those of 1837, since government was now perfectly well prepared to meet and crush us; I felt that we were sacrificed—and the more I cogitated about the matter the more also I became convinced that all the vengeance and the blows would be for us and not for those who were the real cause of the whole mischief.

In 1837, there were hardly 4,000 troops in the province; in 1838, 15,000 troops and an equal number of volunteers well organized and completely equipped. I felt at last that

my common sense was returning to me exactly two months too late !

Having become myself again as it were, conscience and reason resumed their former stand. My own acts, my folly, I should say, stared me in the face. A voice within me whispered sadly: Alas! Poutré, who is responsible for the subscriptions you have so urgently solicited; for the organization of secret committees under your direction? Who is to answer for the three thousand oaths you have caused to be taken by so many men without right, without warrant, and in violation of all law and justice? You have raised the cry of rebellion through all the surrounding country; you have excited the public feeling against the government; you have deceived people by your repeated promises of supplying them with the necessary weapons for an encounter—what is your position now, all of you? If blood is spilt, and poor misguided men brought to the gallows, is not your share of responsibility a very

great one? Are you not one of the great guilty of the situation such as you have made it through your ridiculous credulity? Ought you not to have seen a long time ago that you were made the scape-goat of scoundrels who speculated upon your ignorance? How many families may now be thrown into mourning through your own folly? How many of your friends shall be ruined perhaps for ever? Is it to-day within your power to repair this great wrong you have been the means of inflicting on so many innocent people?

Thus was my mind assailed and tormented by those and other thoughts of a similar purpose.

As soon as I reached Napierville about noon, I was immediately surrounded by the numerous groups of men filling up the streets. I had but one word to tell them: "No arms, my good friends, no arms! Betrayed! mocked! sacrificed! Where are those two

scoundrels that I may call them so before you all?"

—Who do you mean?

—Côte and Nelson, surely!

—Oh! it appears they are gone.

—Cursed be they! I suspected as much. Then I come too late after all! How could I be so stupid as not to have suspected them all along? They have saved their bacon, the rascals. Had I been here, you ruffians, you should not have left the spot so easily?

—No body saw them depart! We believe they went away before sunrise. We are searching for them ever since that time; but as we find them not, it is too evident that we shall not see them again. What is to be done, Poutré? The troops will be here to-morrow.

—What can you expect to do against 5,000 men with four hundred bad muskets? Oh! said I in a rage, if for once we could set our hands upon good real soldiers' muskets! But what is the use of talking and repining? All

is over, that's clear. Let us disband, let every one of us seek his own home or hide for some time. Woe to the man who is caught !

Each of us took silently and sadly the way to his own respective home, full of thoughts for the future of a very little cheering nature. I went straight home, to my father's.

On the following morning, about eleven o'clock the troops marched into the village of Napierville. Over 200 patriots and mostly all the inhabitants of the village were taken prisoners. Both loyalists and patriots were ill treated by the troops, and the former were equally ransacked and plundered with the latter. A number of loyalists seeing that their loyalty was no safeguard, attempted to escape, but were shot at and wounded. One François Chouinard, a patriot, was killed. Another whose name, I believe, was Charles Pouliot, who tried to escape with a four years child in his arms, was also killed and the child se-



riously wounded. Chouinard's wife received some support, but her child none.

I arrived at my father's on the 9th. in the evening. When I shook hands with him some eight days back, I was far from suspecting that I should return so soon and under such circumstances. What splendid ideas filled my mind then! I fancied myself armed cap a pie, a fine sword at my side, pistols in my sash, and a good carabine in my hands, and here I was, at the end of eight days, not only disgusted and disenchanted, but in imminent risk of being arrested, and... who knows? perhaps hanged! for after all, if I have not been hanged, it was not through any favor at the hands of those who were entrusted with the vengeance of government. I shall do them no injustice, I am sure, when I say that they were very desirous of seeing me dance upon nothing.

I spent a very unquiet night, and the little sleep I got was constantly interrupted by starts and dreams of being arrested and led

to prison. I got up about two o'clock and went down stairs, where I found my father who had had less sleep even than myself, silently smoking his pipe near the stove:

—Well, says he, after pleasure comes sorrow! What are you going to do now?

—I should be delighted to know it myself!

—You are sure to be arrested!

—Perhaps things will be quieted down, I've not done much after all.

—What! you've not done much after all! Are you joking? You've organized committees, you had the command of a company, you have fought at Odeltown, you've tramped the whole surrounding country during six weeks with a Testament in your pocket to swear people on, and you say that you've not done much after all? Well, my boy, I tell you that you've done a good deal more than is required to... you know what I mean... and a tear worked its way down the furrowed cheek of my poor

old father. But he soon rallied. "Now, now, old fellow, said he to himself; no weakness, don't be a woman! Be a man, the greater the adversity, the stronger you have to be to battle with it."

—Look here, Félix, my night was spent more in thought than in sleep. Nothing good can spring from a folly of that sort! One always risks his neck in playing such tricks, and your head, my poor fellow, does not hold very tightly upon your shoulders at this very moment. That's a fact! You know, besides, that that rascal M... has no great liking for you. He has you upon his list now! Before this day is over, some one will be coming here to see whether you have come back. Don't flatter yourself, things are as I say. Therefore...

He was interrupted by the sudden entrance of one of my village friends who, before he had noticed my presence, said to my father:

—Let Félix lose not a minute, let him run

away at once, for he is on the eve of being arrested.

And then seeing me standing behind my father :

—Away, off with you at once, he said, M... has just given the order to search for you.

—How the deuce has he learned that I had returned already ?

—If he has not heard of it, he has his own suspicion about it. At all events, this is what I have just seen and heard. Listen to me. I left home at two o'clock to go to the doctor's for poor Mary who is sick, and as I was passing in front of that old scoundrel M...'s house, I saw D... stepping out of it.

—The old rascal ! said my father.

—Then the old fellow told him as he was closing the door after him (I've seen him with his red *tuque* and his big owl-like eyes as plain as I see you there) :

—Look here, begin with Félix. If he is at his father's, the latter is wide awake, he won't keep his son long in the house. Go

thither at once. I would not miss that fellow for a good deal of money, for I've been watching for him for the last year.

"I knew immediately that they meant you, and consequently I cut through the open fields to seek you and give you warning. Had the roads been fair, perhaps I should not have reached here in good time, because D...s light brown mare can't get through very fast in these bad roads, and he is yet fully two miles from here. You have therefore about twenty minutes start of him; don't waste them; you are hard pressed, don't you see!

—How is this? said my father; you've not called at the doctor's; and if Mary be very sick?

—And if Félix be caught! Stop at the doctor's! that would have delayed me too long on the way, specially if I had found the doctor a little hard to arouse. No. When Mary shall hear why I kept her waiting so long, I am sure to be soon forgiven. Well,

good bye, for I am also in a hurry. Now, father Poutré, I've had a long run to come here, and I've another long run to reach home again, do you think that a little *nip* would be out of the way?

—Oh! poor child, said my father; what an old fool I am not to have thought of that. Of course, you are out of breath. You see, my child, there are times when one's head is abroad; pray, do excuse me, for rudeness to my friends is not my wont.

—Never mind, father Poutré; I know very well that it is not the good heart that's wanting.

Then my father poured my friend a goodly glass of his old rum; we both heartily shook hands with him with thanks for his kind warning, and he started on a run on the road to the village.

The night was not over yet; I put on a pair of long boots and slipped some linen into a small bundle; I procured all requi-

sites for striking a light and started to reach the near forest.

I had not proceeded a hundred feet when I heard the sound of a horse's hoofs on muddy road. It was very dark, the sky cloudy, and there was no risk of my being perceived. I retraced my steps to see what was to be going on. I went and stationed myself at the gable of the house close to a half-glazed door which was hardly ever used, and from whence I could perceive master D... with his martin-like face and trying with his ferret eyes to pierce through the partitions.

They had been talking some time both he and my father when I took my post on the flight of steps.

—Very bad times, father Poutré.

—Yes, indeed, very sad, for the poor Canadians will have to go through many hardships.

—Why then do they rise against the government? What ails them? There is not a

country in the world so happy as this ; don't you think so, Poutré ?

—Hum ! hum !...

—What ! you don't think the Canadians very fortunate to live under our good government ?

—Look here, D..., don't make me talk ! I know all about it, I do. I have not stirred ! I thought that the whole attempt was a folly. I even said so to the young folks, but unfortunately once started nothing availed to stop those poor children. But, because I say that they have been foolish, you must not conclude that I believe the government *good* ! There is a great gap between the two assertions. I did not say that the government was bad... I speak to no one ; but again ere I say it is a good one, I'll be hanged... there !... However that's not the question. What brings you here ?

—So then, father Poutré, you are of opinion that the government is not good ?

I saw my father's eyes sparkle with rage.



—I say nothing, D..., but I repeat it again, don't make me talk. There are lots of things to be discussed beside the gouvernement question. Tell me, what's your business with me?

—Well, not much of a business, I only wanted to have a friendly chat with you *en passant*. I am on my way to L'Acadie to serve a few summons. Seeing a light here, I thought I would step in. You are up very early this morning, father Poutré?

—Well, d'ye see, the sun is rather lazy at this season of the year; if we got up as late as he does, why there would be very little thrashing of corn to be done.

—Did you hear about the events at Napierville? A good many casualties of a fatal nature are reported and the news is spreading around.

—I know nothing about all that, my father dryly replied.

—It appears that the prisoners are in great numbers.

—So much the worse.

—Why so much the worse? Do not those people deserve to be punished on account of their doings?

—Oh! if the real guilty ones were punished, there would be justice in that!

—And who are the real guilty ones, Poutré?

My father bounded from his seat, and I could see plainly that he would soon lose his equanimity. I was really very anxious, for a man like D..., be he never so rascally, was a power at that time. My father stared into his very eyes and said proudly :

—The real guilty parties, said he, are those who sell and deliver up their fellow-countrymen, their brethren...

—But of whom are you speaking, father Poutré? Who delivers up his brethren? Is that addressed to me? You look angry... I certainly would not speak a word to injure you, but when we have to deal with all the scoundrels who have risen in arms against

the government... it appears to me that we can well say all that we know.

It is probable that if D... could have supposed that my father was acquainted with the motive of his visit, he would not have been so cutting in his remarks; but how could he imagine that at such an hour his motive could have been known and the alarm given?

I read in my father's eyes, and judged by the looks cast upon D... that he was horribly tempted to send him spinning in the direction of the road, and if he had not known the nature of his mission, I have not the slightest doubt but that he would have done it. He answered then with an effort to appear calm :

—It is unjust to call *scoundrels* men who have only been deceived; and I consider as infinitely more despicable those who...

—Those who punish ?

—Those who hunt them down, replied my father, choking with rage. See here, D...,

when we see, at this hour, a bird of ill omen such as you, we know what that means. If you imagine to impose upon me with that innocent face of yours you are greatly mistaken. I know what you are about as well as you do, and what vexes me is that by worming my secrets out of me you are endeavoring to arrest two instead of one. I have known you for a long time past, D...

—Well then, let us perform our duty. I wish it had been done by any other than me, continued he, resuming his hypocritical mien (for that man was an incarnate hypocrite); but since I have been chosen, I must act.

—No hypocrisy, said my father, you seek Félix, well! just go back as you came; he is not here... And if you are afraid on your way back, a thing frequent with you, sing: "I have found the hare's form," it will save you from trembling when you hear the fall of a leaf. And now, away, for I am no longer disposed to endure in my house your face of a volunteer's valet. Félix is not here, so, away.

—Pierre Poutré, here is a *warrant* which I must execute: and as Mr. M... is informed that Félix is here, for he is aware of it, it is useless to deny it, father Poutré: I must search for him, because I must find him.

—Very well, search !

—Better save yourself from that disagreeable necessity. Wherefore deny it? Félix arrived here yesterday. We know what is going on, you may be sure. Why force me to look all over the house, and ferret about every corner?

My father grasped D... by the arm with such a force that he turned pale in the face, and said :

—No more words, do you hear ! When I say that Félix is not here, that means that such is the fact. I am not one of your sort to lie and then conceal myself ! You know the story about Charles B... ; none knows it yet, but I do know it ! Therefore take heed ! Practise your infamous calling, and quickly begone. If I was of your calibre, I would

denounce you, but I can not think of such dirty work. You will at last find yourself in the place where you are sending the others to, you rogue! Now on with your search!

—Well then, father Poutré, said D..., resuming his most hypocritical air, I know that you are unable to tell a falsehood...

—None of your adulations: the story of Charles B... has elicited them from you in order to force me to say nothing about that matter... Neither your meanness nor your flattery can engage me to keep silent. If I resembled you, you would not be here to-day. You have a duty to fulfil! Fulfil it, and be off.

—If you give me your word that Félix is not here, father Poutré, I will be satisfied...

—Search, coward! Leave me alone with your advances! I do not wish to be indebted to you even in the appearance of any regard.

D... took his way to the stairs leading above, darting a venomous look at my father.

For myself, curiosity had detained me until daylight began to appear. A man could be seen at a distance of 200 paces. I therefore remained crouching by the door for fear he should see me from above. When he came down, in one bound I was beyond the fences and I took my flight towards the thirty acres (*les trente*).

I reached the woods without being seen, and took possession of a sugar cabin. I prepared a good hiding place at a short distance by collecting several heaps of bushes, but I regretted that I had forgotten my axe. I nevertheless picked up some dead wood, lighted up a good fire in the cabin, then I did what generally happens to those who are obliged to hide; I began to think of the past, of the present, of the future, of my former quiet life, of my present situation... how long it might last... would I pass the winter in that hut?... Would I be discovered? Should it be so, what would be done of me?... Would it not be better for me to go to the United States?...

Then my disappointments, the want of arms, my useless journey to Lacolle, Cote's treachery, all were passing in my mind, and then I exclaimed: "Ah! if I go to the United States, beware, Mr. runaway general!"

With all that, time hung heavily on my hands, it is a wearisome thing to be talking to one's self. Then in the afternoon I felt that I could have eaten something, and I regretted that I had not brought some provisions with me, my ideas might perhaps have been more cheerfull. There is but little to eat in the woods in the middle of November, and ready cooked hares and partridges are not likely to fall into one's mouth! Towards the evening it appeared to me that my stomach was ten feet deep.

Now I began to consider it high time to think of eating at any rate. If nothing comes, I will go to the house. It is no luxury to sleep in a sugar cabin, which means to roast on one side and freeze on the other; besides nothing cools the fire like an empty stomach.



Ah ! you d—d D... if I had you, what a *steak* I would cut out of you ! !

While I was meditating on the means of procuring provisions before the night, I heard a voice at a distance which reached me through the trees. I jumped up and was on my feet as if set in motion by springs. I ran out of the shanty, but, of course, could see nothing. "Fool, said I, that voice is six or seven acres distant, and you imagine that you can see whom it comes from." I returned to my shanty without having made up my mind whether I should answer. It was probable that they were looking for me to supply me with something to eat ; my father having most certainly thought of the most needful. On the other hand, it was also possible that it might be D... or some other ferret of his sort hunting after me ! If such was the case, I ought not to remain in the cabin where they would most certainly find me. I went out and hid myself behind the heap of bushes which I had piled up in the morning. From my

hiding place, I looked about through the woods and fancied that I heard two men speaking. This simple fact caused me to reflect and to ask of myself how it was that my father had entrusted another man with our secret. The voices approaching I slipped under the branches, and waited. After a few minutes, I distinctly heard an unknown voice speaking of me.

Where the devil has he gone to? said the voice. We have opened many a sugar shanty and not a trace of a human being. He must however... Oh! oh! here is another cabin. Let us examine it. I was hardly 50 feet distant from the cabin; I could hear distinctly but see nothing. Having opened the door, the same voice said: "Nothing here either." But suddenly I heard my father's voice saying to the other: "Ah! ah! there has been a fire here, the ashes are hot, he cannot be far from this spot." They both left the cabin and my father said: "He is certainly not far off, here is a man's track, quite fresh." As he spoke the last

words I sprung up suddenly, scattering about me the branches which covered me and walked up to them.

—A fine nest for a patriot, said my father, who carried a small trunk under his arm. I suppose that the patriot would willingly eat an Englishman by this time ?

—I would willingly eat three, answered I... I am as hungry as hell.

—We have been looking after you for more than two hours. You have gone very far !

—Since I must hide, it is as good to do it well at once.

—Hear ! do not let us talk, but eat, replied my father, opening the valise which displayed to my sight a magnificent piece of pork with six inches of fat, with bread and a bottle of the *comforter*. The table was soon laid out and the dinner soon swallowed. While I was devouring instead of eating, my father said :

—I assure you that I have fixed that brute D... last night.

—I know it, I have heard it all.

—What, you were not gone !

—I stood at the gable end door, I could see him full in the face, and could hear everything.

—I frankly own that I cannot comprehend how I managed to master myself and not twist his neck off. I fancied I could have twisted it like that of a chicken.

—I was really anxious, for you have not been very prudent. You have said things which might well be against you. It is already bad enough that one should be in trouble !

—True, true ; but how can a man keep cool when a rascal of that sort is trying to make one commit himself ? I have heard at noon that several patriots have already been arrested. I believe that you are better here than in their clutches. It appears that many threats of burning the porperty have been proffered ; it would not surprise me to see many English bonfires very soon.

—Provided that they do not begin with our place.

—Well, if they begin with us, we shall have to endure it. But now I think it would be perhaps as well to be on our guard. A bonfire is very soon set alight.

—It is prudent to be on the alert, father, but it is far more necessary to be prudent in what we say, and you were far from being so last night! Do but think... if you were arrested, whilst I cannot show myself... where would you be, and what would become of the family?

—Do not fear, I will take care in future, and will not get into a passion. Ah! D..., you, rascal you...

—There, do you see, if you saw that scoundrel pass this way, you would cut him to pieces.

—Yes, that is certain; but in the village, or at home, I will be prudent, and keep my temper, or if not it will only be inwardly. Do not be uneasy. Do you know that you have chosen the best corner and nook for your hiding place. You see at a good distance; in two bounds you can tumb' in the hill

and get sufficiently far off to laugh at a ball ; you have made a nest of bushes requiring a good dog to find you out ; you are as comfortable as circumstances will permit. In future we will not let you starve. You have provisions for three days. I cannot come too often, it would raise suspicion.

—We will return and Baptiste will fetch you to-night blankets and an axe so that you may work at something and keep yourself warm, instead of standing idle before the fire. You shall probably have time to lay in a good store for the winter, so amuse yourself, keep a good look-out, and think of your *sweethearts*.

“A propos I might as well send you a gun also. You might kill here and there a partridge or a hare for your dessert.

—Farewell ! father, said I, extending my hand, if anything extraordinary should happen let me know.

I found myself alone once more, and in spite of myself had to revert to my thoughts.

About nine o'clock as near as I could judge, a song struck my ear through the woods. As it could proceed from no one but Baptiste, I advanced in the direction of the voice, and took a part of his load. He had brought with him a buffalo robe, a pillow, a fowling piece, an axe, a pipe and tobacco, bread, some linen and clothes; in short he carried the load of a man and a half. He informed me of the arrest of some friends, the treatment which they had to endure from the volunteers, and the threats of burning the houses of the patriots.

—Do try, Baptiste, to cause some of them to pass this way; they shall pay for the others, I'll warrant.

We then bid one another good night and he left me to the solitude of the forest.

I had often heard of the charms of the forest, of a rural life, of the happiness of loneliness; I had even read some fine passages on that subject; but I invite all those who write such nonsense to try the life in

the woods, with a sugar shanty for a lodging, at the latter end of a Canadian autumn ; I am confident that they will quickly be cured of the poetry of the majestic forest and of the solitude which it affords.

I remained four days alone, and then I received a visit from my father. His house had been searched, and the seekers appeared to believe that I was not far off. More than two hundred prisoners had already been arrested, and those who were dragged to jail by the volunteers were literally treated with greater brutality than dogs.

—I shall have to remain here for a long time yet, said I to my father.

—That is very likely. But do not be disheartened. If we find no means of keeping you out of prison, well, you will go to the United States. I will return in eight days. I am so closely watched that I must keep within doors. You will know me when I come again by three knocks struck against



the trees at equal intervals, repeated from time to time. Farewell.

These eight days appeared to me as long as six weeks, although I chopped almost enough of wood to winter a whole family. Nothing could disturb me, as my conversation was purely inwardly.

On the eighth day I began to listen attentively as soon as it was dusk ; but in spite of my attention nothing could be heard. About nine I returned to my cabin tolerably disheartened. I knew that nothing would have prevented my father, unless something had happened, to come at the appointed time, or to send some one else in his place. That delay meant either imprisonment or severe illness without any doubt. I did not close my eyes during the whole of that night. The next morning I had not the courage to set to work. I had the presentiment of a misfortune. At twelve nobody had come, I was feverish with anxiety, and I had thoughts of risking everything to find out whether any thing

unusual had happened at home. Between four and five no one had appeared. I instinctively directed my steps towards the belt of the forest which led to a hill from whose summit the country around could be seen as far as one league around. The stars were shining when I arrived there, but to my horror I saw before me three buildings on fire at a pretty great distance from one another. It could not possibly be the effect of mere accidents. The government had then commenced to use severity, and not content with ordinary justice, was creating one to suit the purposes, passions and hatred of our enemies.

The infliction of such a penalty was as stupid as it was mischievous. When the proprietors were already confined in gaol, to be tried by exceptional tribunals, it was an atrocious barbarity to deprive their families of their sole asylum. Such atrocities were perpetrated at the time of the severe winters of Canada! To hold the wives and children

responsible for the father's guilt, was no longer a punishment, but a vengeance. Such outrages were unworthy of a great nation. National hatred, local party rivalries, had a greater share in these atrocities than any other motive. The country at that time was governed by the faction at whose head was placed the Attorney General Ogden, and that faction had no other object in view than that of oppressing by every possible means, under the pretence of punishing all that was Canadian. The repression was out of all proportion with the fault.

Twelve executions, and in less than fourteen months more than 400 buildings burnt to the ground by order of the authorities, besides the illegal sentences of the Court-Martial, afford a sufficient ground for appreciating to its full value the rampant adulation of those who dared to tell England : "Your government is just."

The British troops are compelled to retreat at St. Denis, owing to the inconceivable stu-

pidity of their colonel. Twelve days after they return to the attack, when resistance had entirely ceased, and they burn one quarter of the village ! Upon whose information ? On that of the traitors of the place who thus avenged their personal wrongs by pointing out the properties to be destroyed by fire. To destroy by fire in the heat of the battle is easily conceivable, it is often required by circumstances, permitted by the laws of war ; the enemy must be dislodged, the positions which he might retake must be destroyed. But to turn back for the sake of burning a few houses in cool blood, because we have been beaten, is the act of brigands : that is a cowardly action which the sole pressure, probably, of provincial hatred could induce a British army to commit. However, I know that the British officers have often deplored the excesses which they were compelled to commit ; I know that they were ashamed to serve with the volunteers, on account of their bragging and brutality towards women and

children, and of the pains which they took of sheltering themselves behind the troops when they could do so. A great number of the fires were caused by the delations of the rabble in the large villages, for the sake of plunder. Many innocent men were punished owing to the personal hatred of the whole class of traitors whom the government gave importance to, and despised at the same time, in order to obtain the greatest possible number of delations.

That destruction of property was so odious, that even in 1847 it was understood that the persons who had been wantonly ruined and for the only pleasure of doing harm should be indemnified. The Draper ministry proposed a bill of indemnity, but as all those who had been condemned by Court-Martial, a court which had been declared illegal even in England, were denied the benefit of the law, the liberal party opposed Mr. Draper's bill, who fearing a defeat, abandoned the measure.

In 1849, the liberal party having returned to power, took up Mr. Draper's bill. The elections in 1848 had in almost every county turned upon the indemnity bill. The country demanded it, and the liberal party strongly upbraided Mr. Draper and his colleagues for *having made exceptions*. When Mr. Lafontaine rose to power, the country thought that justice would be done, and the unfortunate persons who had been ruined hoped for better days.

After ten months of expectation, ten months of smiles and promises from the *liberal* government; after numerous public meetings in which the Draper ministry was censured without mercy by the liberal party for the exceptions contained in his bill,—quite a natural thing as it was said, it was a tory ministry which could entertain no sympathy for the Canadians,—the session is opened, and the indemnity bill is among the first introduced. The battle is engaged.

Mr. Blake, the Attorney General at the

time, delivers a magnificent speech of five hours in support of the measure; he rails with the most terrible force at the tories; he confounds Sir Allan McNab with his eloquence, crushes him under his sarcasm; he maintains before the house of Parliament that the real rebels against the laws and authority are the tories and not the victims of 1837...Then, suddenly, the whole of that eloquence is nothing more than a spent ball, a bumbshell exploded in the air. The tory faction which had exhausted its rage upon a man of straw burnt in the streets, *frightens* at last Mr. Lafontaine; Mr. Boulton forces the ministry to adopt his amendments previously rejected, and the whole ends in a measure *less liberal* than that proposed by the Draper ministry.

The *liberal* ministry had increased the number of exceptions made by the tory ministry, instead of reducing them. These liberals who were thought to sympathise so deeply with the sufferings of their own coun-

trymen ruined without mercy, were giving less than Mr. Draper. They had obliged him to withdraw his measure, because he did not give enough, and they gave much less still ! The liberal party had opposed Mr. Draper's bill on the ground that it sanctioned in point of fact by its exceptions, the decisions of the Courts-Martial, and the law voted by the LIBERAL party did exactly the same thing ! ! And it went even farther, since it excepted from the benefit of the law, those who had been transported to Bermuda. Mr. Draper's bill contained no such exception ! ! After so many fine speeches at the hustings, after so many meetings in which the Draper ministry had been denounced with such energy, after so many protestations and promises, they granted to the country a bill which caused it to regret that of the Draper ministry ! Vapouring and promises before they became ministers, weakness and incapacity when arrived into port ! How exactly all the *liberal*



ministries of Canada have copied one another !!

But would the mass of those *entitled* to an indemnity be at least compensated with justice? Would they be honestly paid? That was what the country was looking for, that was what it had the right to expect from a *liberal* ministry so strong in its attacks against the Draper ministry which they called tory! Well, there again, the interested parties were doomed to a cruel and bitter disappointment. Not only did the law make odious distinctions, but in the mode of payment, it was guilty of an infamy, which *we*, the interested parties have refused to believe up to the very last moment. Instead of enacting that the persons who had been maliciously and stupidly ruined should be paid *in toto*, it contained this disposition, so utterly devoid of the most simple common sense, that the interested parties should be paid with *debentures* !!

What could be the effects of this foolish enactment?

A very striking example in point was notwithstanding before their eyes. The debentures issued in aid of the sufferers by the Quebec fire became due at comparatively short terms, and were selling at twenty per cent. discount. Debentures at one year's date had been issued in 1848, to supply the immediate wants of the government, and these debentures were selling at 5 per cent. discount. But they enacted that the victims of the volunteers' brutality should be paid in debentures at twenty years' date, bearing an interest of six per cent. !! The liberals, *our friends, our protectors*, had refused Mr. Draper's bill for the purpose only of providing us with one which was *much worse still*.

To-day oblivion has passed over all these events ! To-day the men who betrayed us then, fill the highest offices in the country, live upon a past which they consider as very glorious and we, as infamous. Who

has profited by that famous indemnity, about which so much has been said? Was it those for the benefit of whom it was intended? Not in the least; so far as the greatest number of them is concerned! Those who have derived any profit from it were the speculators, the usurers; those who wherever there is a penny to be made out of the poor, are always ready to take it, not by actual robbing, I admit, but by obtaining it by means of falsehoods, of false representations as to its real value, by taking possession of it by false pretences; by those in fact so justly called *the eaters of christians*.

DEBENTURES PAYABLE AT TWENTY YEARS' DATE!!! And nearly all those who were to be indemnified were *poor individuals* who were waiting for that money to build a cottage, or even for the purpose of obtaining for themselves and families the bread so long wanted! The great majority of the claims were under fifty pounds! That amount represented at the utmost an income of three

pounds. Was there the slightest appearance of common sense in pretending that the holders would not sell their debentures and be satisfied to draw the interest from the government? Was it worth one's while to go out of the way to look after 6, 9 or 12 dollars of interest? What amount of relief could such a small amount afford to a family? At that time they had the impudence to pretend to benefit the poor, and by that very system they were most positively injuring them!

He who was entitled to £500 received an interest of £30 from the government. Such an amount was at least an appreciable income; and a debenture of £500 had a realizing value, representing nearly its nominal worth. There was a pretty good chance of selling it at par, or at a small discount, because it was worth while purchasing, or *being kept on hand if we could not obtain a fair price*. But a debenture of \$100, \$50. What was its worth? Hardly 50 per cent. below its nominal value! All that was said at the time, it was repeated over and

over again by the members and the papers of the opposition. They were not listened to, and they carried the measure, being as deaf to the dictates of common sense, as to their sworn pledges, since, after denouncing so strongly the Draper ministry, they gave us a worse law than his !!! The consequence of the pusillanimity of 49 was that a great number of debentures, *those of the poor*, were sold at a discount of 70 per cent. ! Those who really were in want of an indemnity, received nothing or nearly so ; those who were benefitted by the measure were precisely those for whom it was not intended !!

The 100,000 pounds voted then have hardly produced 30,000 pounds for the relief of the victims, but the *eaters of christians* made a fortune ! The government therefore actually pays about 20 per cent. on the sums which he has in reality paid to the victims of 37 and 38. For the 6,000 pounds of interest which are actually paid by the government to the actual holders of the debentures represent, *so far as*

*concerns the victims of the rebellion*, only the 30,000 pounds which the victims have received. Under the pretence of indemnifying the sufferers, they had presented the speculators on the poor victims' bread with a handsome donation of about 60,000 pounds.

Such is the manner in which common sense, duty, good faith, justice and the sufferers have been outraged !!

All the ministerial papers and the opposition itself, admitted at the time that the government could have carried a complete and just measure. But they attempted to flatter the tory party by yielding something to pacify its anger. It was for that purpose that the Bermuda exiles were excepted, and that exception led to that still more odious one of paying Dr. Nelson, though a Bermuda exile himself, to reward him for his base slanders against Mr. Papineau, and giving nothing to the others. It is for that reason that they have sanctioned the decisions of the Courts-Martial ! And what was the end of all that

weakness, that absolute want of energy and of calculation? The burning of the House of Parliament *because they had given even too much!!*

This is what they gained by flattering their enemies, by sacrificing duty to party interests.

If any body pretends that such was not the object of the ministry at that time, it is easy to be convinced of the truth of the accusation which I bring forward against them, "that of having attempted to flatter the tories" by perusing the speech delivered by Mr. Gagy in the House, on the 27th of February, 1849, of which I here give an extract :

"The ministers by adopting this amendment (that of Mr. Boulton),—at least such as I understand it,—have declared that they accepted the decisions of the Court-Martial *as good and valid*. With such a decision, it is evident that the ministry has advanced *one* step, I will even say *twenty* steps towards us ; that it has tried *in fact to bring about a recon-*

*ciliation* with the tories, by its declaration that all those who had been condemned by the Court-Martial should have no share of the idemnity granted by the House. Does that not imply that those who were sentenced by the Court-Martial were guilty? and now, inasmuch as these Courts-Martial had in our eyes a right of jurisdiction in this matter, we must support the ministry who admits the truth of this opinion.

“Why is it that the ministry did not oppose the amendment to its resolutions brought forward by the Hon. member for the county of Norfolk (Mr. Boulton), that amendment by which he blames, he *dishonours* men who have sacrificed their own selves, who have devoted themselves to the welfare and to the happiness of their contry-men?

“THE TIME IS NEAR AT HAND WHEN YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS WILL CAUSE YOU TO BLUSH WITH SHAME AT THE REMEMBRANCE OF SUCH BASENESS!



“ I cannot be reproached with having sacrificed any one on this occasion ; it will be perceived that I am consistent with my principles. But there are men who can be reproached with having *consented to sacrifice* those among their countrymen who have taken a part in the rebellion, it is true, but who have atoned for their guilty conduct, their imprudent acts, by a long exile and by confiscations which have brought misery and sorrow to their families.

“ Had I had anything to do in this matter, I would have preferred on this day to share in their shame than to register here, as you do, a vote which will in fact *render valid the judgments of the exceptional court* which has condemned them. I am happy to say *that their condemnation by this House* is an act for which I am in no way responsible ! It is an act which the ministers have consented to be responsible for ! It is therefore an act which brings me *nearer to them*, or rather *which brings them far nearer to us* ! I will therefore vote for

the ministry, because by their vote, *they agree with us* in admitting that the Courts-Martial were lawfully constituted !”

Here then was a tory of old standing who complimented the liberal ministry of that time, for sacrificing the rights of his countrymen ! Who is happy himself to see that the ministers are *making advances* to the tories, and who, as he says, cannot refuse to vote most heartily with the ministry who has the baseness to sacrifice the rights of the Canadians !

That lesson was not even understood !

When we used to see the ministry receiving lessons of liberalism from M. Papineau, it could be a matter of surprise to no one, each stood on his own ground. But to see a *liberal* ministry receiving lessons of liberalism from Mr. Gagy !! made us realize in the country, how much the liberals were fallen, how much they renounced the past. When Belzebub commended the good angels, it became evident that their wings had been clipped ! The

fact was that the liberals were giving the kiss of peace to the tories in Mr. Gugsy's person ! He most assuredly did not approve of what Mr. Papineau wanted ! That kiss of peace brought forth its fruits a short time after, when the liberals allied themselves to Sir Allan McNab, the idol of the incendiaries of 49 !!

Since that period we have ever seen the liberals constantly leaning toward toryism, and abandon more and more the traditions which in former days had formed the basis of their political creed. Formerly the distinctive quality of our political men was their personal disinterestedness ; now egotism, ambition, the necessity of remaining a minister are such that falsehood, corruption and, on a celebrated occasion, the mockery of the oath of office, have become the best means of holding office. Formerly honour was the main spring of our men in office ; at present it is party interest, an interest which resolves itself invariably in the sordid cupidity of its members.

Formerly it was necessary, in order to become the political leader of the people of Lower Canada, to be possessed of the highest moral and intellectual qualities; to-day, to remain a minister, we are truly inclined to believe that one must have never possessed any of these qualifications, and even without any of them, people fancy themselves still made of the same materials out of which ministries are built.

I hope that my readers will forgive this digression for the sake of the importance of the subject.

The reader will remember that I have left off my narrative at the moment when I could see from the outskirts of the forest the burning of several buildings round the country.

I returned to my cabin irresolute and completely discouraged. That spirit of revenge foreboded nothing good for myself. Nothing then was left for me but to start for the United States, for I could not make up my

mind to winter in the forest; I had enough of the language of trees!

I had been reflecting for a long time on my situation, when I heard the knocks promised. I ran to the place from whence they proceeded, and in a few minutes after found myself face to face with one of my friends.

—Where is my father? inquired I.

—He sends me in his stead. He is so closely watched, that he was informed to-day that his property would be burnt if he did not reveal your hiding place. That threat has fired his temper. He told the colonel that he was not the man who would deliver up his own child, even if he knew his place of abode, and that if they chose to burn he would beg half an hour's notice. The colonel considered that reply as an insult. Your father told him that all the colonels in the world would never force him to dishonour his name; thereupon the colonel replied that he would send down men to burn his place to-morrow.

“Your father bids me to tell you to set out for the States. You have enough of money with you; if his property is destroyed, he says that he can rebuild it with his savings and requests that you be not anxious on his account.

—My brave father! I will not allow them to ruin him in that manner, I replied. Let us away at once, I return with you.

—But you shall be arrested...

—Certainly. But since I alone have been guilty of folly, I will not allow my father to suffer the consequences, I will deliver myself up.

I started in consequence, in spite of all the remonstrances of my friend, and arrived at the house that night at half past eleven o'clock.

—You here, Félix! and wherefore come you?

—Father, I could never forgive myself for being the cause of your property being burnt down. I drew the wine, and I must drink it.

To see you ruined at your age! Ah! I will never permit it. The moment they govern the country like savages, a man of honour can no longer remain in concealment. You have never approved of the movement, therefore it is unjust that the punishment should fall upon you.

—Félix, houses and barns can be rebuilt, but a man's life, when once taken, all is over! A damage can be repaired, but a head falls for ever. Spare your father one of the greatest afflictions which can fall to his lot in his old age. It is yet time, save thyself and cross the frontiers.

—Father, I run no risk by giving myself up, and come what may, I will get off. I will first save your property, and then find the means of saving myself. Fear nothing for me, I will be as safe in prison as if I were in the United States. The English have beaten us, but I will be revenged on them without exposing my life. I have always said that a Canadian was cleverer than an Englishman,

and I am determined to prove it. I will therefore go to gaol, but will come out of it you may be sure ; and I will laugh at them to their very faces over the bargain, without being discovered by any of them.

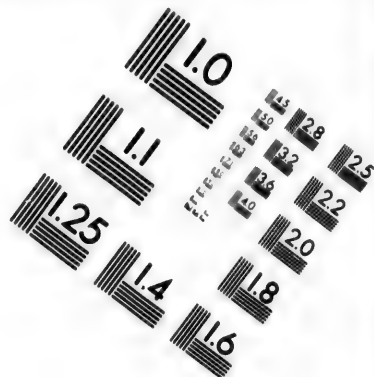
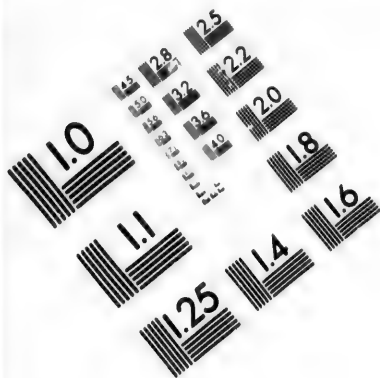
My father looked at me fixedly to see if I was really in my senses, and replied :

—Hark ye, Félix, what is the use of that nonsense ? the time for laughing is past when one's head is in jeopardy. After all you have done you cannot expect a pardon...

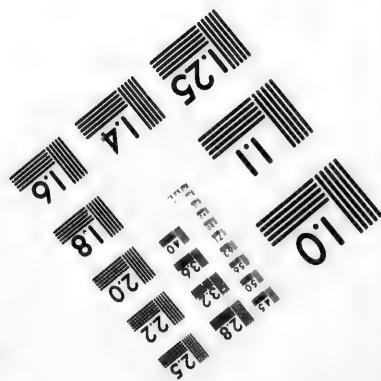
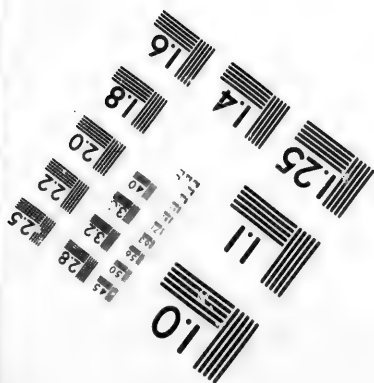
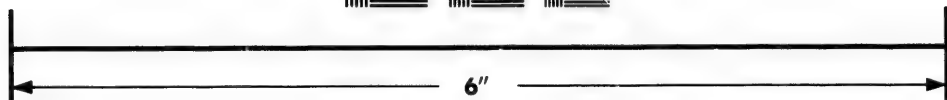
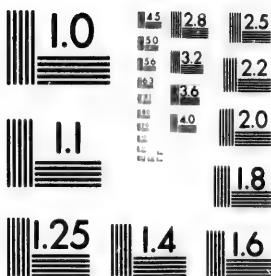
—And I have made up my mind not to sue for pardon either. I have a sure way of saving myself without injuring any body, and I shall be saved. If I cross over to the United States your property is destroyed to-morrow ; if I stay it is safe and I will get off with a few months of imprisonment ; there can be no hesitation and I will surrender. All I ask of you is to keep yourself perfectly easy on my account, for my plan is infallible.

—Tell me at least what is your plan.





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—No, that would spoil every thing. And now what is said, and as an honest man has but one word, I will stick to it. I remain here and give myself up. In this way I will be back with you sooner than if I went to the United States.

I spoke with such assurance that my father half convinced, replied :

—I do not understand you ; but since you are so sure of success I will not insist any longer. Only, remember, that it is better for a man to lose his head than his honour.

I apprehended his idea and replied :

—Fear nothing on that score ; on your honour and mine I swear that I will not put you to shame.

“ And now let us go to bed ; it is as well to pass the night in bed as at the guard house. Ah ! I will sleep better here than in the woods. Nothing eases the mind like a settled and final decision.

I really did sleep as soundly as I did before the day on which Côte gave me my

mission. Besides, after sleeping during the cold nights of autumn before the fire of a sugar shanty, wrapped up in a buffalo robe, with a few disjointed boards for a bed, and after leading that life during a fortnight, it is extraordinary how comfortable we find a bed.

It was rather late when my father awoke me. He tried for the last time to persuade me that I could yet make my escape, that my plans might perhaps fail through some unforeseen circumstances ; that I was exchanging the certain for the uncertain ; that when once in prison I would no longer be able to control the events at my will ; that I possibly might not be able to execute the plan which I had adopted... But I told him that I was resolved, that my plan depended on me alone, that nothing could make it fail but my own want of energy, and that on that score I had no risk to encounter.

—Well, said he, do as you wish, but be prudent and cautious.

We partook of our breakfast rather quietly, my father a little anxious, and I as calm and composed as if I was attending at a marriage contract.

About ten o'clock, I put together some wearing apparel, and informed my father that I was going to the village.

—I will drive you there, said he. I know the colonel, and who knows but that he may perhaps be kindly disposed. Yet I do think that he dislikes you very much.

One hour after we arrived at the village of St. Johns. We called upon the Colonel to whom I said as soon as I saw him :

—I have sinned against the government. I acknowledge my fault and deliver myself up into your hands. Do with me as you please.

The Colonel was a friend to my father, but at that unfortunate period, political reasons or necessities had a great deal more weight than personal friendship.

The Colonel did not speak to me, but my

hands were tied behind my back. I have not the slightest doubt but that he might have released me if he had chosen. He certainly possessed the confidence of the government, and it is possible that the latter would not have disowned him, if he had set me at liberty, after due examination. But I was known long before our rising as a wrong headed fellow and a refractory spirit who was in need of a good lesson.

When my father saw me thus tied up, he said :

—Let me tell you, said he, that matters begin to look very ugly. They hate you more than I thought. It would have been much better for you to have crossed to the other side of the lines. All of you young men are wrong in not listening to those who have more experience than yourselves. I feel my heart shrinking as if a great misfortune was to befall me.

— Do not be uneasy, I replied. Once into gaol, I know what I have to do, and I

shall return to you, perhaps quicker than you imagine.

—Please God it may be so.

He then gave me some advice, and left me to return home and console the family.

I slept at St. Johns on that night. I did not sleep there as well as on the previous night, for one cannot sleep very well with hands tied behind one's back and the floor for a bed. The next day no one interrogated me, and at once I was sent by railway to Montreal with some other prisoners, escorted by a picket of volunteers. We arrived at four o'clock, and were conducted towards the gaol. The streets were in an awful state, our feet covered with liquid mud. As soon as the rabble saw the escort with prisoners, they formed into groups and threw stones and mud at us. The insults and yells of that crowd were dreadful. These rascals so cowardly before men able to stand before them, were now brutal and daring before men who could not defend themselves. The volunteers were

formed in two lines on each side of our little band, and had to push back the crowd which did not spare them the stones and mud any more than they did to us, for the missiles were thrown at all hazards and they obtained their full share of them.

At five we at last arrived before the walls of the gaol. The crowd redoubled its yells and projectiles, and we entered the court in all haste. Some of the prisoners were literally so covered with mud from head to foot as to make it very difficult to recognize them.

When we arrived at the gaol our names were entered in a register, and I was conducted to the fourth story, in that part called the chapel. It forms that elevation over the roof, which is still to be seen over the North-East wing of the gaol. At that time it was nothing but a vast garret, without any partitions, where I met with a great number of my friends.

I candidly confess that when I crossed the threshold of the prison that moment was a



hard one for me. It is useless for me to say that I knew but the name of a gaol and that I had not the slightest idea of the life within its precincts. When I found myself in those dark passages, with the man who conducted me carrying a bunch of large keys ; when I saw those walls which defied violence, those cells occupied by friendly faces ; the narrow space in which they were confined ; the dismal appearance of the building and no less lugubrious air of the gaolers, I realized that guilty or not, a man could not be tranquil in such a place unless he was one of those brutish natures which Providence sends us now and then, and throws in the midst of society in order to inspire it with the horror of crime.

I was conducted, as I have said, to the fourth story, where I met with several friends and acquaintances. I did not find the expression of their countenances in harmony with the horror with which their terrible lodging inspired me. The expression of nearly the

whole of them was that of resignation, some even had lost nothing of their gaiety. Their appearance contrasted so much with my horror that I experienced a painful surprise, and that I answered with marked slowness to the questions addressed to me from all sides.

All these people, some of whom were reserved to such a terrible vengeance, were bidding me welcome with eagerness, as if the addition of one companion could add any comfort to the general misfortune. Man is made thus ; a new victim is the cause of tears to those outside and of smiles to those within.

More than 500 prisoners were confined when I was imprisoned. All had passed through the same oppression of the heart under which I was then laboring, and several of them said : " Oh, bah ! you will do like us, you will make up your mind to it also ; after all they will not hang us all ! Well, we are prepared for the worst, but each of us hopes that the bad number will not fall to his

lot. In two days you will be like us, resolved to meet death with courage if it comes, preserving at the same time the hope of escaping."

I perceived however that several of the prisoners looked upon the future with gloomy forebodings, and that the calmness of some of them was due more to their belief in the absence of proofs against them than to their hopes in the indulgence of their judges. Those who knew that the proofs of their participation in the rebellion could be easily obtained were far from being hopeful, and some of the officials who regularly visited the prison used to insinuate that those who would give information would be treated with indulgence, whilst the guilty would be treated with severity.

Considerable offers were even made, but no traitors could be found, and all the crown evidence came from outside.

The 19th of December, the day appointed for the execution of Cardinal and Duquet

arrived. Although we were all prepared for that tragical event, its effect was terrible amongst us. The awful reality was there before our eyes. Two esteemed friends were torn from us to satisfy party vengeance, for it was absurd to say that our foolish rising had in the least endangered the British domination. Each of us individually felt struck in the same degree as if we had been brothers by blood and not merely so by a community of ideas and opinions.

Two men irreproachable in their personal conduct, universally esteemed, having been led astray rather than guilty, were to suffer the penalty of real criminals, of thieves, of assassins.

England, in all its power, was awarding the punishment of death to men at the worst guilty of a simple riot, and treating like brigands men who, the riots of 38 excepted, had never failed. The modern idea of the inviolability of human life in political offences (murder excepted), could not find

its way to the minds of our enemies, prejudiced as they were by unreasonable fears, out of proportion with the dangers which they had encountered. Of course, I speak of the leaders of the government at that time, and of the influential men of the tory party who were aiming at nothing but vengeance, and who believed, to a certain extent, that they beheaded a whole nation by executing a few individuals.

There is so little of *real criminality* in an attempt at rebellion, that we have seen the English government obliged since that epoch to rehabilitate its victims under the pressure of public opinion, and to accept for its principal advisers the very men who would have been hanged without mercy if they could have been arrested. Executions for purely political purposes are therefore, in whatever light we view them, real murders, unjustifiable cruelties, since the government who is guilty of them is MORE DISHONOURED THAN ITS VICTIMS. Who is the man who does

not to-day look upon Cardinal, Duquet, de Lorimier, Henderlang, Narbonne, Nicolas, Daunais, Hamelin, Robert, Decoigne and the two Sanguinets as victims of party hatred, as martyrs in fact, since they have sacrificed their lives to their convictions.

Will not the real author of these murders, Attorney-General Ogden, be execrated by the Canadian public, while monuments of sympathy and of national sorrow shall be dedicated to his victims?

When our two friends were taken from our midst to accomplish their sacrifice, the interior of the prison offered a most solemn scene. The dismal and hollow sound of the trap door of the scaffold when it dropped, resounded in our hearts as if each of us had been struck in his own existence.

We all looked upon that execution as the forerunner of what was perhaps in store for us, and it was generally believed in the prison that the number of executions would be considerable.

I had been thinking for some time of executing the plan which I had formed and which I had not revealed to my father.

After the execution of Cardinal and Duquet, I saw clearly that I would share the same fate; for I was certain that heavier charges could be proved against me than had been proved against them. Seeing that the sentence had been so soon executed, I became aware that I could not escape but by executing my plan, and I consulted on that subject one of my companions, named Béchard: he was an old farmer of L'Acadie, of about fifty years of age, of the highest respectability and upon whose discretion I could rely with full confidence.

On the evening of the execution, being alone with him, while the prisoners were walking about silently, speaking in whispers, for the murder of our friends had struck us with stupefaction, I said to him:

—I believe, my dear Béchard, that we

have a fair chance of following our poor friends, and to go by the same road.

—I frankly admit that such is my opinion also. The government is revenging itself, and since it is determined upon it, it will take as complete a vengeance as possible. I really do not know what demon conducts the affairs in these times.

—You have a better chance of escaping than I, you have not sworn in 3000 men, and especially you have not told your secrets to every body.

—True, said Béchard, but one may have smaller chances than you and still have a very fair one of being hanged.

—You think then that it is all over with me?

—To tell you the truth— we are men and able to bear it—I am surprised that they did not begin with you.

—The devil ! you are not consolatory.

It is better to believe the worst, and come back to the better, than to flatter one's self foolishly and finally fall into the worst.



—True, and since the execution of our two friends, I am confident that it is all over with me. That makes me see all in black, do you see! But there might be one way...

—A way to do what?

—To save my head.

—Hum! I doubt it.

—Tell me, Béchard, you are much older than I, have you ever heard that a madman had ever been hanged?

—No, never; but we are not mad, I hope.

—Certainly not, but we can pretend to be so.

—Are you raving? exclaimed Béchard in utter amazement, pretend to be mad! Who has ever heard of such an idea? You cannot voluntarily lose your senses no more than you can regain them when lost. In short, you can no more make a fool out of a wise man, than a wise man out of a fool! Pretend to be insane! Ah! it is not as easy as you suppose. For half an hour it may pass, but for weeks, for months! Bah! it is impossible.

No man can play such a part. How can you help laughing only, for that is the characteristic sign of insanity. If you forget for one moment to keep up a serious countenance, you are lost! Oh! you may give it up! The very idea is perfect madness.

—My dear fellow, I will personate insanity, and will practice every possible act of extravagance, and will never laugh. Hear me! I am done for, *flambé* as we say in good Canadian parlance. They cannot hang me twice for discovering my trick, if they do find it out. Therefore I will run the risk. I have thought of it for a long time, and I believe that when a good way of saving one's life is found, it is worth one's while to try it. You can therefore be prepared to see me raving mad by to-morrow.

—I certainly do not wish to oppose your idea, replied Béchard, but I have no confidence in your attempt. If you succeed, so much the better, for I consider that you save your head. But I cannot believe that you

will remain several months without laughing! At all events when you feel that you are about to give way to laughter, think of the rope, perhaps that will have the effect of rendering you quite serious.

—Well then, at nine o'clock to-morrow I will be insane, and really so, of that you may be sure and possibly I may be more insane than a real madman! But mind you, take care of yourself and do not betray me! You at least must look as if you really thought me mad!

—As far as that goes, make your mind easy. The moment the thing is understood, I will aid you as much as I can; for, frankly, you have no other means of saving yourself but that one.

The next morning about nine, while speaking with a few prisoners, I uttered a shrill cry, then fell at full length upon the floor, and imitated the motions and contortions of a person in a fit of epilepsy. I struck my head against the floor, shook convulsively, gna-

shed my teeth at the risk of dislocating my jaw bones, in short I firmly established the belief that I had fallen in an epileptic fit. The emotion of my two hundred companions was great. As we all slept on the floor nobody had the idea of putting me on a bed, and they left me for some time struggling in convulsions. They had formed a ring around me, and I could hear them discussing the incident.—But nobody knew that he fell into fits!—He fell from his height backward!—He must have hurt himself!—Have you heard the cry he uttered? I was almost afraid of it.—Poor fellow, it is a pity, for he has a very good head.—Bah! it is not such a great pity, if he is to meet with the same fate as the others!—We must at least do something for him, said another. The idea struck them to wash my face with salt water. At that moment, I did not think of the effect that it would produce. I let them have their own way, though I struggled a little less than I had done before.

But when they applied the salt water over my forehead with a cloth,—and the application was not made drop by drop,—the water was pouring,—I suddenly felt the same sensation as if a cat's claws were tearing my eyes out. The salt water was taking effect. The others were continuing their application with the best intentions in the world, my eyes were on fire, and I dared not show symptoms of feeling any pain. They continued for sometime their remedy and my eyes were smarting horribly. I was obliged to endure my pains with patience under the penalty of betraying myself, and I resolved to try some other means the next time.

At last, I pretended to be thoroughly worn out, my limbs appeared more flexible, and I began to rub my eyes as if recovering my senses. I had found the time very long, with my eyes full of salt water.

I remained for a good hour perfectly calm, as if recovering my strength by degrees, but

in reality to gain time to find out by what way I might begin to show my insanity.

Suddenly, I rose, walked majestically backwards and forwards; then suddenly uttering a frightful yell, I cried out with all my might: "Clear the way, here comes the governor!" and I rushed forward at double quick time. I brutally knocked down those who did not get out of the way in time, and in that manner I reached the extremity of the chapel. Arrived there I struck the door with terrible force, then turned back and continued my walk uttering the same yell. But this time, every body having taken refuge along the walls, I was obliged, to get at them, to cross from side to side, crying out at the same time: "Get out of the way!" in the most furious manner. Those who did not make room quickly, were knocked over without mercy. I made desperate charges at them, and their surprise, or their conviction that I was really insane, prevented their resistance and permitted me to tumble them over with

the greatest facility. All the prisoners were staring at me with eyes starting from their sockets, and unable to find out the meaning of what they saw.

I walked up and down the passage five or six times, attacking every one indiscriminately, with such force that the prisoners did not know where to find shelter. I cut all sorts of capers and gambols, I galoped several times up and down the room, neighing all the time like a colt; immediately after, I started in pursuit of some of the prisoners, and caught hold of one whom I tripped over. Uttering then a savage yell, I attempted to strangle him. He at once cried out for help with all his might. The other prisoners were struck with fear at that moment, and did really believe that I was about to kill him. Several of them laid hold of me, and when I perceived that six or seven men were about to seize me, I permitted them to do so, I let go my man, and allowed them without any resistance to lead me to the other end of the

chapel. When they saw that I offered no resistance, they relaxed their hold by degrees. But just at the time when they the least expected it, I violently stretched out my arms with such suddenness and force, that three of them were thrown to the ground. They were so astonished that they let me go, and before they could again lay hold of me, I sprung backwards and stood on my guard. Two of them attempted to regain their hold of me, I knocked them down with two blows and seeing that the others hesitated, I fell upon them with such fury that they ran off to the right and left. Being master of the field, I gave orders to the effect that nobody should look at me, because the governor was about to dress, and I quietly and slowly resumed my walk.

At that moment one of the turnkeys entered the chapel. I immediately flew at him, crying out "thief," laid hold of him, and made him fly about in all directions. He attempted to defend himself, but with a blow



on the shoulder, I threw him down at a distance of ten feet. He got up quite stunned, and rushed at me partly through fear and partly through a sense of his duty, but I caught hold of him by the waist, lifted him and pitched him in the door way. He groaned ! Had it been an ordinary house door, he certainly would have passed through it ; but prison doors are strong, and the poor devil howled piteously. Some of the prisoners remarked : " He will kill him, that's certain." The turnkey ordered the prisoners to tie me up ; but they told him that I was laboring under an attack of furious insanity, that I had already knocked down several of them, that I could thrash ten men through the strength which madness gave me ; that it would be much better to soothe than to irritate me... in short they said so much that the turnkey became quite cool and said : " Confound that maniac, I really did believe that my last hour was at hand. We cannot keep such an animal here." I ordered at that moment to

turn out the *thief*. Seeing them hesitate, I uttered a savage yell, and one of my comrades remarked to the turnkey: "You see very well that he is mad, do as he desires, or he will be the death of us." The turnkey made up his mind to be turned out; as soon as the door was closed over him, I told the prisoners that I would reward them generously for turning out that thief. I continued to talk quietly, but so foolishly and ridiculously that my fellow-captives laughed most heartily.

Twelve o'clock having just struck, Béchard offered me to dine with him. I accepted his offer at once, took his arm, and with marks of the greatest cordiality, I dined with him. I kept myself quiet until four o'clock, when I thought proper to fall into another fit of epilepsy, and to exhibit the most terrible contortions. They attempted to have recourse to salt water, but I had not forgotten how my eyes had been burnt in the morning to allow them to try that game over again. As

soon as I saw the cup within my reach, I threw it at twenty feet from me with a slap from my hand, and continued my spasmodic starts, striking at the same time my head against the floor with such force that those present were struck with horror. Five or six of them attempted to hold me, but I sent them to the right and left, either with my arms or feet with such force as to astonish them. One of them returned with salt water, but I was determined not to allow one single drop to touch my face. Instead of a cup they approached with a cloth thoroughly imbibed with the brine. As the individual was approaching me carelessly, I seized hold of the cloth and threw it in his face. The brine having touched his eyes caused him to utter an awful curse. A hearty laugh took possession of all parties present, in which I could not help to join, but I soon altered my laugh into a permanent grimace. However as they were all under the impression that the salt and water had been beneficial to me in the

morning, they called for more, but the person who attempted to administer the remedy placed the cup and the cloth into the hands of another, saying: "You go yourself, I have done with him."

One of the prisoners approached me cautiously in order to throw the brine over my head. As soon as I found him within a fair distance, and at the moment when the cloth was approaching my face, I struck him on the nose most violently, as if in a fit of convulsions. He walked off to stop the bleeding. Seeing that my fit did not cease, they resolved to hold me in order to prevent me from injuring myself. Several of the prisoners laid hold of my hands, but I squeezed theirs with such force that they yelled out; some of the others whom I seized by the arm found out that I had literally driven my fingers through their flesh. None of those returned to the charge. I caught another one between my arms, and throwing him over me, I pressed him so tightly that he

turned blue in the face: I was breaking his neck. Two men attempted to open my arms, but they could only lift us both from the ground without opening them. I held my left wrist with my right hand, and it was really impossible to open my hand. The one I held had barely the strength to call for help. At last, by another pretended convulsive fit I opened my arms, and he got up exclaiming: "Let him kill himself if he pleases, that cursed madman, I have enough of him. His arms are made of iron!" My fit lasted at least twenty five minutes. I was in a heavy perspiration. I pretended to be exhausted and allowed my arms to drop gently to the ground. Béchard placed a folded coat under my head and during the space of half an hour I listened to what was said about me.

I perceived that they were all persuaded that my epileptic fits were real, and that nobody had the slightest doubt of my imposition. The most convincing proof in their

eyes was the extraordinary strength which I displayed. None of the inmates of the prison knew that I was possessed of more strength than the generality of mankind, and they attributed to my attack of epilepsy or insanity what in reality was only due to my muscular strength.

I heard them say about me: "None but an epileptic or a madman can be so strong as that."

I became convinced that my stratagem was succeeding admirably. After listening for a length of time, I got up suddenly and pretended to assault the circle around me, but Béchard having come forward to meet me, I thought that it would be better to allow them to believe that some one, at least, had a certain control over me, and I became quite calm. I offered him my hand, bowed to him with reverence, showed him the greatest respect and taking him by the arm I walked about with him. I showed my teeth and fists to all those who attempted to

approach us, and they all kept themselves at a respectful distance. I remained quiet and composed until night.

On the following days I continued to have my fits of epilepsy at nine in the morning and at four in the afternoon regularly; and during the intervals I committed all kinds of imaginable acts of madness.

I used to open the windows, shake the stove pipe, run about the room like a race horse; I sold by auction farms, houses, and played the turnkeys all sorts of tricks.

The reports of the latter brought up the gaoler to ascertain what was the matter. I offered him my hand quietly, and he stretched out his own, I made his bones crack under the strength of my grasp, and he uttered an exclamation which elicited laughter from all present. I then assumed such a stupid air that he was convinced that I did not know what I was about. He was a man of six feet in height at least, and rather strongly built. I placed my hands over his

shoulders, and staring at him fixedly, I shook him a little, and seeing that he offered no resistance, I seized him by the waist and lifted him at two feet from the floor at arm's length. I saw that he too was convinced of my strength. I replaced him on the floor with a polite bow. He then said to the other prisoners: "It is difficult to keep that man here if his insanity continues. I will let the sheriff know of it." He then told them to take care not to irritate me, for, said he, "he might be terribly dangerous with the strength which he shows; he has lifted me up like a child."

Five days passed in that way, and on the evening of the fifth, finding myself alone with Béchard, I resumed my usual looks of a man in his senses and said:

—Well, Béchard, do you think that I can play off the maniac well enough?

I have never seen such an expression of deep surprise on the countenance of a man



as that which was depicted on Béchard's features.

—How! cried he, starting up suddenly, you are not mad?

—No more so than I was last week! But do not speak so loud, or you will betray me.

—Oh! but honestly now! is it possible that you are in your senses?

—But have you really believed that I was mad?

—Good God, yes! Fit for Bedlam! Worse than all the madmen put together. I have never seen anything to equal it!

—How do you like the way I make them dance?

Béchard's eyes were still wide open.

—It is but too true! said he, for he is in his senses! But for all that many of the prisoners have wished you to the devil. The gaoler has told me that he could not keep you. But look you, it is useless, I cannot think that you are not out of your senses!

—But I had told you that I would go mad!

—I know it, good God, but how could I imagine that a man in his senses could imitate the madman in such a manner? When you became so mad, I believed that the Almighty had punished you for such a thought, and deprived you of your reason. I would have sworn to your madness with my hand in the fire. Now! really, are you not mad?

—Certainly not! All that I do, is preconcerted, all that I say is arranged in my mind! Ah! I hit hard, do I not?

—Damnation! you maul them most unmercifully. It is that which has convinced me of your madness! The idea of knocking people over in that manner! You spare nobody whether friends or not.

—Excepting you, Béchard.

—True, I had not taken any notice of the fact. I thought that being great friends, you recognized me better than the others, that's all. But tell me, how the devil can you help laughing? As for me, I did not laugh, be-

cause I was too sorry to see you in such a condition ; but you, when you see them staring at you, and running away like a flock of sheep pursued by a wolf ?

—Ah ! there lies my greatest torture ! But when I feel too much inclined to mirth, I put to myself the question whether I would laugh if I saw myself with the white cap on my head and the rope round my neck. As soon as that idea has taken hold of my mind, I become furious, and the inclination to laugh disappears completely. Well then, you find that I play the madman well !

—Oh ! yes, as well as if you had never done anything else in your life time. You may continue ! Your chances are good. If I could do as much, I would give all my lands.

—But now, Béchard, that you know all, take care of yourself. Be on your guard, for the least thing can cause me to be found out.

—Oh ! make your mind easy on that score, I will help you as much as I can.

The next day, Dr. Arnoldi, senior, made his appearance in the chapel of the prison. It was on the sixth day of my madness. He examined me attentively, felt my pulse and looked into my eyes; but I took care to remain quiet. He asked me several questions, but I did not answer. He questioned the prisoners who related the details of my mad pranks. I kept my eyes fastened upon him, but did not utter one single word. He called one of the gaolers named Lamirante, told him that he would send me some medicine, and gave him instructions to make me take it. After that he asked me one other question to which I did not answer, but I continued to look at him fixedly. The old man appeared to understand nothing at all about the matter.

About two hours afterwards, Lamirante came in with a large bowl containing one pint at least of a blackish liquid. "Here, my madman, said he, take that coffee."

I took the cup, walked off at a short dis-

tance, and at the time when nobody was looking at me, I emptied the potion in the leg of my boot. I then returned towards Lamirante, pretending that I was drinking. When I found myself near him, I showed him the empty cup and let it fall down at his feet shattered to pieces.

—Never mind, said Lamirante, you have enough in your body to keep you quiet, my maniac ! and he walked off.

The doctor's visit made me reflect a good deal on my position. " He will find me out, thought I. The old rogue looks at me as if he suspected something. He is incessantly feeling my pulse. If he comes back again, I will help him to a dish of my own cooking.

I spoke to Béchard on the subject.

—Do you think the old gentleman can find me out by feeling my pulse?

—I think not. Some madmen have a very regular pulse.

—He looks at me in a droll way at all events, the old curmudgeon !

—Oh, bah ! if you continue as you have begun, you will run no risk whatever. Nobody can help considering you as mad.

—I did not like to try any of my nonsense this morning, because I was afraid that he might suspect something. After all a physician ought to know something about that, perhaps a little more than the whole of you at all events ! But if the old man returns tomorrow, I will give him a shaking like the others. He must not be more easily let off than my friends. Try and be present, and when you come to his rescue, I will stop, but not before. Until then I will shake him like an old pair of mittens. As he is very lean and long he cannot make much resistance !

—That's right, give him a bit of a shaking, but do not injure him too much. The old fellow talks pretty big sometimes. You remember how he used to call us rebels and d..d rebels about ten days ago... Choke him as near as possible.

—Well, that's all right, since you are of my own opinion, he shall swallow the pill.

At three quarters past eight the next morning the old doctor arrived. It struck me that his face was still longer and more snappish than usual. "Wait a bit, thought I, that face of yours will grow longer by and by." The old man went, as usual, to look in every corner, and then approached me accompanied by Lamirante. He felt my pulse for a considerable time, looked at me fixedly, dropped my wrist, looked into my eyes a second time, felt my pulse again, and asked of Lamirante whether I had taken the medicine.

—Yes, was the reply, I gave it to him myself.

—Had it any effect?

—Not the slightest.

—He is worse than a horse, was his remark. Well, we will give him another stronger dose. I will send it in a short time.

Then the Doctor felt my pulse over again,

pressed his fingers tightly against it as if to count its pulsations with more accuracy, and stared me in the face as if he wanted to read my inward thoughts.

Suddenly I shook my arm to oblige him to drop my wrist, uttered my usual deep groan, caught the old man between my arms, and made him jump two or three times; then laying myself down on the back at full length, and squeezing him to suffocation, I shook him from right to left as if he had been but a child, I handled him like a flail striking the floor with his boots. He offered but little resistance, but cried piteously: "Help! help!! murder!! For God's sake take me away!" Perceiving that he could speak so well, I passed my right arm around his neck, and held it with all my might. The old man was silent of course, but I could hear him groan. Two or three of the prisoners attempted to open my arms, but without success. I held fast. Béchard being satisfied that the punishment was



sufficient, came to the rescue. I pretended to be exhausted, allowed him to remove my right arm, with which I held the old man by the neck, dropped my left arm against the floor, and Béchard laying hold of the old Doctor by the waist, put him on his legs again. He was as red as a cherry. It took him more than half a minute to recover himself. The prisoners were laughing in their sleeves. Lamirante pretended to be in despair and exclaimed: "Good God, I thought that he would have choked you! When he is in one of these fits, he can tear ten men to pieces."

—But you never told me that he fell into epileptic fits! gasped the Doctor half suffocated.

—Bah! replied Lamirante, he has two of these fits every day.

—Oh! the devil! said the old man, turning on his heels muttering something between his teeth; and I have never seen him since!! he had enough of my fits!

I was obliged to invent new proofs of folly every day. I could not make up my mind to appear like one of those stupid madmen who always do the same thing over again. Since I was playing the fool, I was determined that my insanity should be diversified.

Therefore I had one day the mania of fishing, and held a line and rod for hours together without moving. The rod was generally a walking stick or any thing else. Another day, I took to field sports. I killed bears, elephants; making the most infernal noise during my expeditions.

Early in the morning, I used to boil some water to say my mass. I took four of the prisoners for my acolytes, I allowed them \$10 a month, and before the mass, I walked round the room, and a dish-cloth in hand I sprinkled the faces of the prisoners with my boiling holy water. During the mass I delivered a sermon or published marriage bans. I always took care to marry the curate of the parish, which was the cause of more

merriment than all the rest. I would predict the end of the world, announce the advent of the Antechrist, of the seven headed beast, I saw the last judgment, I would kill the devil so that we might have no hell ; I would answer to deputations of angels who came to present me with thanks on behalf of the Holy Virgin. The prisoners were roaring with laughter at my nonsense.

I quarrelled with them very often. Some of them used to tease me a good deal and sometimes would be punished by me with severe blows. I was far from deriving pleasure in so doing, but if I had spared them, my insanity might have appeared to be but a mere sham. I therefore punished them as conscientiously as I could.

A few days after the second and last visit from the doctor, I established myself in the capacity of an auctioneer, and commenced my sales with men of war and arms, which I sold regularly, and often my sales amounted to upwards of \$100,000 daily.

Another day I would hire men as lumberers. I used to give fifty and even one hundred dollars a day. I had entered the gaol with a few hundred dollars. I therefore would give twenty dollars to one, thirty to another, and Béchard collected and returned to me all the money I had expended. By that process my purse was never empty.

It would be fastidious to describe all the mad pranks which I invented daily. There is one of them however, which I practised two or three times during the latter days of my stay, which greatly contributed to my dismissal. One day I began to plumb the stove. No sooner had I applied the plumb line, that I became furious against the stupid fools who had put up the stove so badly. It will fall down, cried I, that's sure, it is all on one side. I took a stick of wood and placed it under one of the legs, and then tried the plummet once more. It was worse of course. I placed another stick. The hind part of the stove was higher by eight inches than

the front. The prisoners attempted to interfere. I grasped the poker and brandished my weapon in such a manner as to convince them that it was better not to meddle with my business. But the stove was not perpendicular. I brought another stick of wood and placed it under the third leg of the stove. The fourth leg stood in the air. I applied my plumb line once more, and slightly pushing the stove with my knee it fell on one side. It was filled with fire. Great was the alarm! The keepers were sent for! They arrived, the smoke blinded everybody, a part of the stove pipe had fallen down; the soot was flying about; the floor was on fire; it was impossible to handle the stove which was red hot; they threw water upon the floor and stove, which was left on the side until it became cooler. The keepers were furious. The gaoler tried to interfere and to lecture me about it. I answered by abusing him most unmercifully; I accused him of having resolved to burn the gaol and the prisoners with it; that

the stove had been set up all on one side on purpose, that it had fallen down in attempting to set it to rights; that if it had been right, I would not have touched it; that he was paid by the government to burn us alive, that after all it would be quicker work in the end than to hang two hundred men... in short I told them everything that came across my mind.

What could he say to a madman? Besides, the gaoler as well as the keepers were afraid of me, having all experienced my strength. He went away muttering between his teeth, and ordering that the other prisoners should prevent me from touching the stove. One of them told him: It is not so easy as you imagine.—Well, replied he, rather brutally, we will tie him up!—Ah! you want to tie me up, you great beast? said I furiously; well, wait a little!” and with a yell I flew at him. But he was near the door, and I was still far off; so in two or three bounds he was out and bolted the door after him. I made some

noise, but soon cooled down, as my fists could do but little execution against a prison door.

This act of madness caused a great deal of excitement, on account of the danger of fire incurred.

Two days afterwards, I was ordered to appear before a sort of court of inquiry. Attorney-General Ogden examined me. Messrs P. E. Leclerc, Delisle and a few officers appeared to me to sit as judges. They tried to obtain a deposition from me against a certain Frs. Ranger. I knew enough of him to get him hanged, but thanks to my insanity, I could laugh at the Attorney-General and at the judges.

A dozen of questions were put to me, but I answered the greatest nonsense imaginable. Mr. Ogden insisted to continue the examination. Mr. Delisle pretended that it was evidently impossible to get anything out of me. Mr. Leclerc was of the same opinion. To cut every thing short, I threw myself on the floor as

if in a violent epileptic fit. The judges made their exit in the twinkling of an eye.

My feigned convulsions lasted about ten minutes, after which they placed me on a pallet. I had not slept on anything but the bare floor since a long time, I fell asleep and I was left there until four o'clock. At that time some one tried to awake me, I did not stir and pretended to be fast asleep. They shook me as roughly as they could, but I continued to sleep. At last they left me alone, and I began to congratulate myself on my stratagem, when I felt suddenly as if one hundred thousand pins were pricking my nose...they had applied a bottle of hart's horn to my nose. That had never entered into my programme, and I was forced to sneeze. I was conducted back to the chapel, and had not the pleasure of sleeping that night on a mattras.

Ten days or so after that event I was again brought down below. This time it was for the purpose of examining me on my own acts of



rebellion. At the very first question, I took a book and commenced to write, making up the accounts of the judges in order to pay them, and give them their discharge. I told them that they were both lazy and good for nothing, only fit to rob the Queen's money ; that I would inform her of the fact, and that I would dismiss them to begin with. I laughed in their face at each question that was put to me, telling them that if they considered themselves as my judges they were greatly mistaken, that I did not care one straw for them and all their equals, and that I insisted on their going away. They were obliged to dismiss me, for I never uttered one word of common sense.

A second attempt at examination was attended with the like success, as a matter of course. Instead of appearing as the accused, I turned upon them as the accuser, and told them many a truth very plainly to their face. After which I fell into one of my fits.

Messrs Delisle and Leclerc declared then

that it was useless to attempt to get anything out of me, that I was too insane to be kept in prison. They really took pity on me in good earnest. I heard them one day expressing the opinion that my folly would only increase in prison, whilst I might have a chance of recovering in the midst of my family and with their attendance.

I resolved to avail myself of their good dispositions and to appear worse than ever, in order to convince them that my insanity was greatly aggravated by close confinement. I thrashed my comrades unmercifully, I broke the window glasses, I perpetrated the most prodigious feats of extravagance, I refused to eat, but would steal some bread and eat it by stealth.

One day, while the stove was red hot, I seized the occasion to apply the plummet, and consequently to throw it over on the floor. Of course, there was a great uproar; smoke, soot and ashes were flying about in all directions; buckets of water were thrown on the

floor to prevent it from taking on fire... The goaler comes up, attempts to remonstrate, but at the sight of my two fists, he scampered off without sound of trumpet or at least of drum. The keepers having set up the stove, I complimented them on their skill, remarking that this time at least, they had set it up more sensibly than they had ever done before.

—Had you always placed it in that manner, you would not have given me so much trouble about it, said I.

—Hold your tongue, you fool, was it not put up in the same way?

—A fool! You called me a fool! Ah! well, wait a bit, I will let you see what it is to be a fool!

I caught him by the waist and pushed him, or rather threw him so violently against his comrade that they both fell over. They were soon on their legs again, as you can imagine. But a well directed blow with my fist between the two eyes knocked one of them down, and I grasped the other by the throat as if

intending to choke him. Béchard came to his rescue, and as soon as he spoke, I became quite pacified. Béchard's power over me was always a matter of surprise to all the other prisoners. He was the only man in the prison who held any command over me. In spite of their best endeavors, none of the other prisoners could obtain the slightest control over me, but on a word from Béchard I became quiet at once.

Béchard told the keepers that it was a shame to lose their temper with a poor madman, and they went away rather dissatisfied with me.

A few days after, one of the keepers told Béchard that it was seriously spoken of discharging me, because I was found dangerous. The gaoler insisted strongly on my removal, because he thought that sooner or later the confounded madman would kill somebody, for he had the strength of two horses instead of that of one man.

Béchard informed me of the fact. I, of

course, commenced a general row, and in the afternoon the stove took a fancy to fall on one side.

The gaoler came up this time in a fury with ropes, threatening to tie me up. Instead of flying in a passion as usual, I took the cords, passed them round my wrists and placed the ends into his hands to make the knots. This disarmed him, and he unfastened the cords, saying: "This poor fellow must positively leave this place."

On the following day, Messrs. Delisle and Leclerc came to the prison and examined me. They left me fully persuaded that I was totally bereft of my reason, and that it was impossible to make anything out of me.

Two days later, on a Saturday, a priest conducted by one of the keepers approached me.

—Here, sir, is the madman and the greatest one I have seen yet, most assuredly. Do not irritate him, for in his state of insanity, your cloth would not be respected for any

length of time; I have already passed through his clutches, and it is no joke.

Such a visit appeared to me suspicious, it struck me that they were laying a trap for me, and that the priest was only sent to see how I would behave towards him. He addressed me a few friendly words, and I conversed with him for some time, taking care to drop here and there in the midst of the conversation, some absurd piece of nonsense to bewilder him. I then took a chair to sit down and took him on my knees rather unceremoniously. When I held him there, I spoke such absurd nonsense that after leaving me, he was convinced, as well as the others, that my poor head was completely and for ever deranged.

Messrs. Leclerc and Delisle had been so pressing upon the Governor, that they had obtained an order for my release. They came to me on the Monday (what a date!) to inform me that I could be off. I was struck with the idea that if I left at once, something might

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be suspected, and that it would be better to be on my guard.

I therefore answered that it was not my intention to leave at all, because the Queen would be dissatisfied if I left her service without due warning.

These gentlemen assured me that I could go away at once and that they would be answerable for all that might happen.

I positively refused.

My baggage was brought down and they attempted to turn me out. It was about nine in the morning. They tried with three, four, and even five men, but I made a most desperate resistance. I held fast to everything, and when I laid hold of something with my hands, it was impossible to move me one inch. Several of the soldiers on guard were sent for without success. I slipped through their fingers like an eel, and after several fruitless attempts they determined to draw off my attention during one hour or two. I waited and walked about the passages of the gaol, and

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after a few hours I was conducted to the door and invited to take a walk outside. I refused a second time, intimating that I would not quit Her Majesty's service. Suddenly five men seized me and pushed me forward as far as the door. As soon as I arrived there, I placed my hands against the frame and drove them back most furiously.

—What a devil of a man ! exclaimed the gaoler.

They tried it again, but I pretended to become furious and they made no further attempts.

The sensible men were beginning to be more embarrassed than the madman.

It was getting late and I was still in gaol. Several means of taking me by surprise were resorted to, but all failed. At last, towards four in the afternoon, Mr. Leclerc, if I mistake not, had the idea of showing me a bottle of brandy, promising me a glass if I would go out. I went out immediately and had one glass. But I was still in the court, and when-



ever they induced me to go towards the door, I offered resistance. Somebody therefore went outside of the door of the court and showed me the bottle. I made no further resistance and walked out of the court. The door was closed immediately. I made a dash at it, but I was told through the wicket: "Ah! you may be off, we have had enough of you."

I therefore found myself in St. Mary street at liberty, and with my pardon in my pocket, Mr. Delisle having pinned it inside in the morning. I thought that my heart would burst with joy. However, they were observing me from the wicket, and it became necessary not to betray myself. Although we were still in the month of April, and that ice was still to be found in the streets, I took off my boots, and walked barefooted in the direction of the city, carrying my boots and baggage on my back.

I went straight to the old market on Jacques Cartier square, and took up my quarters at Giraldi's Hotel.

I personated the madman as when in gaol. I called for liquor and treated everybody. In the course of about two hours, having had drinks to the amount of ten shillings without paying, I was told that if I wanted more, I must pay for what had previously been given. I did not answer, but taking a cigar on the counter and a \$10 bill from my pocket, I folded it, applied it to the gas-burner and lighted my cigar. Then throwing carelessly the bill on the counter, I went out in the yard, but remained near a window to see what would take place.

The bar-keeper seeing a paper looking like a bank-note, unfolded it and discovered that it was a ten dollar note. It was hardly burnt. He showed it to several persons, telling them the circumstances, and asking who I was. Nobody knew me nor from whence I had come. Only they perceived that I was mad, and the act of lighting my cigar with a ten dollar note was a sufficient proof in their eyes.

At that very moment I returned (it might

have been about eleven o'clock at the time), and seeing a large number of persons in the hotel, I ordered a supper for thirty persons.

My order created a great deal of surprise, but I repeated it with such an air that all objections ceased. A table was in consequence spread out for thirty persons, and I invited everybody without distinction. Several of the parties present found that I talked very sensibly, and could not conceive how I could act so foolishly and yet exhibit such sense in what I said. We conversed gayly during the supper, and all retired to their beds. I paid the expenses and followed the others. The next morning about ten, after a hearty breakfast, I left for Laprairie where I dined. After dinner, I followed the railway track on my way to St. Johns. But after walking for nearly five miles, I met, at the head of a picket of volunteers, captain Richard McGinnis, who knew me, and who naturally mistook me for a deserter from the common gaol. He obliged me to follow him back to Laprairie.

I took particular care to persuade him that I was not recovered from my insanity. After a while, I made a movement which indicated that I carried a paper in my waistcoat pocket. It was immediately taken from me, but the paper was found out to contain the Governor's pardon which Mr. Delisle had pinned to my waiscoat.

Captain McGinnis, after perusing the document, was obliged to release me and I took the road to my father's house, where I arrived at last at midnight.

It will easily be believed that I knocked at the door with eagerness. A few moments after I heard my father's voice inquiring:

—Who is there?

—It is I.

—Who are you?

—Félix.

—Félix? he is in gaol!

—T'is I, father, I was set at liberty yesterday!

The door was opened at last, but my

father unfastened the bolts to see whom he was speaking to and not to admit his son.

I threw myself into his arms, exclaiming:

—I had told you that I would come back!

—Good God! T'is you! But how comes it? I have been told that you were sentenced to death!

—Ah! but they have not been able to try me even!

—Well then! since it is really you, I will commence by calling up every one. Come now, all of you, Félix has just returned, come and see him. In an instant the whole family was on foot and they could hardly believe their own eyes. A shower of questions were asked of me.—How did you get off?—Since when?—How is it that you come so late?—Are you hungry?

—Hungry! oh yes! that is my ailment.

—Oh! then, said my father, we will begin with the little drop, and the women will spread the cloth.

—So you had heard that I was to have been hanged!

—Yes, no later than last Sunday; and I felt that I had done wrong in listening to you.

—But then did you not think of my plan for obtaining my liberty?

—Bah! I have always said that it was a piece of folly which you had taken in your head, that you had told that only to prevent me from regretting that you had delivered yourself up. But now, you can tell us by what means you have made good your escape!

—Father, not more than ten days after my entrance in the gaol, I pretended to be insane, and to have epileptic fits; I had fits twice a day, and I have played the part of a madman so well, that they all believed me to be really so, and I have obtained my pardon at last, here it is; and I held out the paper to him.

—What, you have been released under the belief that you were insane?

—On account of that reason solely. I was more insane than a madman.

—But is it possible that you can have played the madman during such a long time without being discovered?

—Just as you say. Had I not played the madman I would have been hanged long ago! I was one of the most deeply compromised!

—Well then, let us thank God, said my father, and kneeling, the whole family offered a prayer of thanksgiving.

I sat down to table, and was obliged to narrate all my mad freaks while in prison from beginning to end. All hearts were disposed to mirth, as one may believe, and they laughed even to tears at the circumstantial recital of my acts of madness. The treatment which old Dr. Arnoldi had received at my hands, the ingenious manner by which I restored the stove to a perpendicular, my sales by auction, my refusals to leave, my obstinate resistance, my readiness to follow a man who showed me a bottle to allure me, all these were told over and over again several times, without wearying the patience of my

listeners, although I repeated the same things ten times over again. I was really looked upon as one *escaped from the gallows*, for the newsmongers had spread the rumor of my impending execution.

Useless to say that the conversation was kept up until a late hour, and the rising sun was illuminating the eastern skies when we retired.

The news of my return and of its real cause spread in a few hours over the parish and vicinity. I had many friends. During several days my father's house was constantly filled with men who were anxious to learn from my own lips the details of my insanity, and I was obliged to repeat to satiety, at least to myself, all that I had done, said or thought during my imprisonment.

I returned by degrees to my old pursuits, cured of all revolutionary ideas, and without the slightest inclination to begin again.

I was convinced that in politics as well as in other things, legal means, though the long-



est, are the safest, and that exceptional cases excepted, the proverb truly says: "That more is done by kindness than by violence!"

One month or so after my exit from gaol, some business brought me back to Montreal. I there met with Mr. Delisle in the street. He recognized me at once. I did not feel quite easy, for it was impossible for me to plead insanity, and my imposition was known to every one. He addressed a few words to me and invited me to call at his residence between five or six in the afternoon.

There was certainly nothing in his tone indicating the slightest hostile intention, but his invitation made me feel a kind of giddiness. Why had he invited me to call at his residence? What could he want with me? Mr. Delisle was precisely the man who could have been chosen to examine me and to verify the state of my mind, and see whether I had not obtained my release through an imposition. Had anybody spoken ill of me to him or to

the authorities? Was it their intention to be revenged on me for my imposition? As a madman they were naturally obliged to release me, but when they had proofs that my madness was nothing but an imposition, could they not dismiss the past and sue again for judgment? They could not try a madman, but as my reason had never deserted me, none of my faults were forgiven, and the false pretence under which I had been discharged, could in reality but show them in a worse light.

The truth was that I had imposed upon the authorities, and that in the disposition in which they were at that time, they might perhaps feel inclined to make an example. My pardon had been granted out of mere pity, but if the truth had been found out, I would have got something very different. The truth was known now; we had enjoyed at St. Johns some pretty hearty jokes at the expense of the officials whom I had duped; it appeared therefore to me that the whole

affair might end in accordance with the proverb: "He will be best off who laughs last;" and that did not exactly suit me.

If they had invited me for the purpose of imprisoning me, it became evident that I would not get off this time! I regretted that I had not continued to be insane for two or three months longer.

I reproached myself with having made known my stratagem too hastily. I found myself compromised without any possibility of defending myself.

On the other hand, something was telling me that since they had once before taken pity on me they might perhaps do so again. There could be no crime in attempting to save one's head by an innocent stratagem in itself. The trick had been well played, and after all it was but fair. I had blinded even the practised eye of a doctor. They could not with any show of reason be revenged upon me for having deceived them. Such a supposition appeared to me too mean. To imprison

me a second time after granting my pardon, could no longer be considered as a punishment, but an odious act of barbarity.

Besieged thus by fears and by the gloomy prospects of the future, I reached Mr. Delisle's residence about half past five o'clock. I felt very uneasy and a sort of a choking sensation.

Mr. Delisle was at dinner with fifteen or sixteen of his friends. I was immediately ushered into the dining room. Mr. Delisle shook my hand cordially and made me take a seat at the table.

I was confounded at the sight of so many persons, at the glare of the lights, at the splendid manner in which the table was set, to which I was unaccustomed, especially at the sight of the persons present, whose countenances coupled with my prison reminiscences, appeared to me as of bad omen. I was invited to a glass of wine, a few minutes after to a second, while the conversation was limited to indifferent topics.

—Now, said I to myself, they want to make me tipsy in order to make me speak. I must be on my guard! The general conversation continued, and one of my neighbors asked me to take a glass of wine with him. He filled my glass, but, in drinking his health, I merely touched it with my lips, then I looked at him to give him to understand that I was on my guard, and would not allow myself to be led into drunkenness.

A quarter of an hour after I had sat down at table, Mr. Delisle turning towards me, said with a smile:

—Now then, Poutré, you have shown a great deal of wit for a *madman*, you must tell us about it. I have brought all these gentlemen together to hear the story from your own lips.

I was still under the persuasion that he was laying a trap for me, and I was not only embarrassed, but I looked as if I was so. Mr. Delisle perceived it, and said:

—Do not be afraid. I have not asked you

to call on me for the purpose of submitting you to an interrogatory, but you must consider yourself here as one of my friends. What is spoken at my table goes no further. You have played an admirable trick, and we have no ill feeling towards you for it. You have obtained your pardon, so there is an end of it, therefore, fear nothing, and tell us the whole thing as fearlessly as if you were with your father, your family or your friends. Everything you will here say is sacred.

These kind words caused my choking sensation to disappear in a moment, and I answered :

—Very well, since it is so, I will tell you the whole matter quite willingly. Frankly, I sat here very uneasy. At present I have no fears.

Then I narrated from beginning to end all my inventions to blind every one as to the real state of my mind.

I amused them during three long hours and was no longer afraid to drink wine, and

it was certainly worth drinking, for I had *seldom or never* tasted anything like it.

We all passed a gay evening, and once rid of my uneasiness, I took my full share in the general amusement.

It was near midnight when we left.

On the following day I returned to my father's house whom I informed of my invitation, my uneasiness and of my pleasure during the evening. This incident was the subject of conversation for several days, after which I returned to my former avocations and agricultural pursuits, but I continued to watch with eagerness the political events of the day.

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